# THE NATIONAL INTEREST

Summitry Then & Now

## "HUMAN RIGHTS": THE HIDDEN AGENDA
*by Irving Kristol*

## GRADING THE WAR COLLEGES
*by Williamson Murray*

Changing South Africa *by Fleur de Villiers*
The State Department & Nicaragua *by Max Singer*
The Status & Power of Japan *by George R. Packard*
When Countries Go Broke *by Clifford M. Lewis*
Khrushchev in America *by Charles A. Sorrels*
The Idol of Stability *by Fred Charles Iklé*

Essays & Comments:
Robert L. Goldich, Douglas J. Feith, Daniel Pipes, Steven Metz, Whittle Johnston & Owen Harries

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# "Human Rights": The Hidden Agenda

Irving Kristol

TO THE BEST of my knowledge, the first time the issue of "human rights" became a focus for a major foreign policy debate in a Western democracy occurred a little more than a century ago in Britain, when Gladstone divided the country because of the massacre of some 12,000 Bulgarians by their Turkish rulers.

Gladstone was a believing Christian, with an intensity of religious commitment that, in the United States today, would surely be regarded as a disqualification for high office. He was appalled that the British government, under Disraeli, seemed unmoved by the massacre of Bulgarian Christians by Turkish Muslims. And Disraeli was indeed unmoved. Though nominally a Christian, he could hardly be called a believer, much less a true believer. What he did care very much about was preventing Russia, the self-appointed Slavic "protector" of Bulgarians and other Balkan peoples under Turkish rule, from liquidating the Turkish empire and acquiring Constantinople and the Dardanelles in the process. He saw this as a serious threat to the new British empire he was in the process of creating—an empire that would include India and Cyprus, with the area in between (Afghanistan, Egypt, etc.) a British sphere of influence. For Disraeli, Russia's imperial ambitions were the main enemy, and it was to frustrate these ambitions that he tried to preserve the integrity of the Turkish empire—even if it meant a war with Russia, which he was prepared to contemplate. In the event, the Turkish empire was beyond salvaging, but at the Congress of Berlin Disraeli was still able to come away with "peace with honor"—i.e., with Cyprus in hand and the Dardanelles out of Soviet reach. As a concession to the Tsar, the Bulgarians did get some dilution of Turkish sovereignty, but for Disraeli this was distinctly a minor matter.

In the brief period that intervened between the original Bulgarian massacre and the Congress of Berlin, Gladstone did more than denounce Disraeli for lack of Christian compassion. He elaborated an alternative view of Britain's role in the world and of an appropriate British foreign policy. It was, quite simply, an anti-imperialist view, a candidly "little England" view. He thought it ridiculous for Queen Victoria to become Empress of India, saw no point in having Cyprus as a colony or in establishing military outposts in Afghanistan. He believed in self-determination for the Christian peoples of the Balkans and did not give a damn for the Turkish empire, which he regarded as a

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barbaric relic—but he was not about to do anything to "liberate" those Christian peoples. And while he did not like the idea of Russia acquiring the Dardanelles, he did not think it was worth a war to prevent it. This was not just a point of view, it was a program.

When Gladstone returned to office in 1880, however, the "facts" that Disraeli had created, the public opinion that had been solidified behind them, as well as the coercive necessities of international power politics, prevented Gladstone from carrying out his program. He never left any doubt as to what he would have preferred to do, had he been free to do it. But he was not free, and the issue of "human rights" slid once again to the distant margins of British foreign policy.

When one looks back at this episode, one is struck by what one can only call the "innocence" with which the issue was raised and debated. Ever since the end of World War II, in contrast, when "human rights" again became of international concern, the entire discussion has been tainted with disingenuousness. For the past four decades, a concern for "human rights" has not simply and mainly been opposed to a hardheaded and hardhearted realpolitik. On the contrary, despite the sea of sentimentality on which the issue of "human rights" has floated, that issue has, as often as not, been an accessory to a certain kind of ideological politics.

Today, most discussions of "human rights" are misleading because beneath the surface there is almost always a hidden agenda. An issue of "human rights" today is all too likely to be an issue exploited in bad faith.

Am I questioning the sincerity of the thousands of "human rights" activists in the United States and elsewhere? Well, sincerity in politics is a tricky affair. It is more common in politics than cynics think, but even political activists can have difficulty knowing what it is they are being sincere *about*. It is not always easy to distinguish between sincerity and a passionate self-righteousness that cares only for the purity of conscience which inhabits a posturing self. Many of the most ardent Northern abolitionists, prior to the Civil War, were so offended by slavery that they urged that the South be encouraged to secede. Were they being sincere about slavery, or about their own moral fastidiousness? God only knows.

There is no doubt that most Americans who exhibit a passionate interest in "human rights" are moved primarily by humanitarian motives—usually by an understandable, even commendable, outrage at one particular abuse directed against a particular person or group of persons. It is then very easy for them to slide into a feverish humanitarian*ism* which disorients their senses when they confront issues of foreign policy. In such a condition, they are easily manipulable by those who have a professional, as distinct from a simple, humanitarian interest in "human rights."

Yes, one must certainly respect the courage of those human rights activists who live and operate in countries and under circumstances where self-sacrifice is a possible consequence of their commitment. Yet it also has to be said that even some of those who make this exemplary commitment do not necessarily care about "human rights" in any general sense. Thus, I do not share the widespread admiration for Archbishop Tutu of South Africa, because I am reasonably certain that if and when the African National Congress comes to power, he will be a vocal apologist for its tyranny and brutality. My certainty on this score derives from his placid acquiescence in the brutality and tyranny of existing black African regimes.

On the whole, then, I think the question of "sincerity" is best left aside when discussing "human rights" agitation. Much human rights agitation today appears to exemplify what Hegel called "negative activity"—a fanaticism of the abstract that assaults the actual without having in mind any practical plans for improving the actual. In politics such "negative activity," whatever its motivation, always ends up serving a positive political purpose. It seems to me that the key question today is whether such activity is



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linked to a "hidden agenda." Much of the time, I would argue, this is the case. Moreover, it is this linkage that explains why the issue of "human rights" has achieved such extraordinary prominence in our time.

THE ERA of bad faith in "human rights" began soon after the conclusion of World War II, with the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. This document has been widely criticized for the bland way it equates "social and economic rights" (the right to a job, the right to medical care, vacations with pay) with the kinds of traditional political rights (government by consent of the governed, due process of law, etc.) that have prevailed in the liberal democracies. But there was more than intellectual error or enthusiastic idealism at work here. The document was an important first step in establishing something like a moral equivalence between liberal capitalist democracies and communist or self-styled socialist regimes. This was the hidden agenda that gave birth to this text.

It is probable that most of those in the West who endorsed the Declaration did not realize what was happening. They shortsightedly perceived only immediate advantages to their own political agendas. The trade unions were delighted to see their longstanding demands elevated to the level of "human rights." Liberals eager to construct a welfare state were pleased to think that they were now enlarging the sphere of "human rights." So, naturally, were social democrats, for whom the welfare state is a necessary transitional regime toward some kind of socialist society. To the degree that these groups shared a common ideological purpose it was the denigration of "old fashioned" property rights in order to create a more egalitarian society—and to this same degree, they were complicitous with the "hidden agenda," even if they didn't fully realize its implications. On the other hand, some of those involved in the composition and promulgation of this text knew exactly what they were doing, and were fully aware of its implications.

Those implications, spelled out over the succeeding decades, have been momentous. To begin with, the Declaration legitimized the notion that totalitarian or authoritarian societies that emphasize "social and economic rights" as part of an official egalitarian ideology have their own distinctive virtues as well as their obvious vices, to be balanced against the virtues and vices of liberal-capitalist societies. While this did not usually result in a literal "moral equivalence," it did frustrate any effort at a strong comparative moral judgment. It is not too much to say that what was involved was nothing less than a firm step toward the *moral disarmament* of the West.

Perhaps an even more important intellectual consequence of this new conception of "human rights" was the near-magical transvaluation of a venerable political idea: the idea of tyranny. Clearly, any authoritarian or totalitarian regime officially dedicated to an egalitarian ideology and officially committed to the entire spectrum of "social and economic rights" could not simply be described as a tyranny, even though the kinds of political rights distinctive of liberal societies were nonexistent. This helps to explain what to many thoughtful people is otherwise a mystery, or a sheer perversity: why the majority of liberals in the West extend such an extraordinary tolerance toward "left-wing" tyrants.

Traditional liberalism spoke not of "human rights" but of *individual rights*, these being almost exclusively rights vis-à-vis government. It explicitly recognized only one "social or economic right": the right to property, including the "property" of one's labor power. This right was thought to be the cornerstone of all those political rights that collectively defined a liberal order. In and of itself, of course, it was not a sufficient basis for those rights—but it was deemed a necessary basis for those rights. Nothing in the experience of the past three centuries has invalidated this thesis. Political liberties exist only in societies that respect individual rights, including property rights. True, the



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degree of respect (or non-respect) will vary from country to country, and from time to time. Moreover, in all liberal societies today, property rights have been limited by various entitlements that some would call "social and economic rights," although they are never constitutionally defined as such. But wherever these entitlements are given a massive priority as part of an egalitarian ethos, a liberal society either will not exist or will not endure for long.

To put it bluntly: the effect of the "hidden agenda" was to help delegitimate the market economy ("capitalism") that is an indispensable precondition of a traditional liberal ("bourgeois") society. It had the further implication of casting into doubt the moral status of American foreign policy, which has never thought it appropriate to concern itself with "social and economic rights" in other countries. The importance of this latter implication has been gradually revealed over the course of the past two decades. It is today the primary "hidden agenda" of most activist organizations concerned with "human rights."

I have to emphasize (lest I seem paranoid) that many of the people involved in these organizations are naive innocents. But among the organizers and leaders there are always some full-time professionals who are sophisticated enough to know exactly what they are doing. "Human rights" indeed is only one aspect of their endeavors. It has been documented—though little notice has been taken of this—that many of the same people who are among the leaders of "human rights" agitation are also active in anti-nuclear agitation, arms control agitation, extremist environmentalist agitation, unilateral disarmament agitation, anti-aid-to-the-*contras* agitation, radical feminist agitation, as well as all sorts of organizations that sponsor "friendship" programs with left-wing regimes. Since these are not only energetic people but very intelligent as well, they have been very successful in giving the issue of "human rights" a special "spin" in a certain direction.

Take, for instance, the question of "torture" which has become so prominent in "human rights" agitation. Note that I put the word in quotation marks, because one of the successes of the "human rights" movement has been to broaden the definition of "torture" to include what would otherwise be classified as "police brutality." Americans would be disapproving of but not outraged at police brutality or the use of third-degree methods against prisoners in distant lands; we are, after all, familiar enough with this phenomenon at home, and would not be surprised to learn that it is far more common in "less civilized" (i.e., most other) countries. But torture, real torture, is an abomination to the bourgeois-liberal sensibility, a violation of that sense of human dignity which is at the very root of our liberal individualism. So a focus on torture is a brilliant bit of public relations.

The question that should be asked, but isn't, is: Why is torture such an issue now, when in years past it never even entered any discussion of international relations? Is torture more common today than it was, say, thirty years ago? There is no reason to think so. In a country like Turkey there has always been a thin line between sheer brutality and outright torture in its prisions. But Turkey, a member of Nato, is an important military ally of the United States. Are we really willing to help destabilize its government in the interest of prison reform? And are those who are so willing really more interested in prison reform than in such destabilization?

In fact, torture (and police brutality, too) may well be less common in the world today because of the power of the media to expose such abuses. In general, actual torture is used today mainly in countries where it has been a traditional practice for centuries. It is also likely to be used in circumstances of a guerrilla insurrection (urban or rural) where the police and military—themselves targets (and often victims) of assassination—are determined to acquire information that might help them suppress the rebellion. That there is provocation to torture is not, of course, a justification, since civilized opinion properly



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decided long ago that there is no justification, whatever the circumstances. But by focusing on instances of torture (or of police brutality now counted as torture) the "human rights" activists score an important point: They help legitimate the insurrection that today generally comes from the left, while doing their bit to discredit those governments that are trying to suppress the insurrection.

CRITICS of the "human rights" organizations assert that these organizations operate on a double standard—they seek out authoritarian governments that are on good terms with the United States and emphasize the violations (real or supposed) of "human rights" that occur there, but tend to be relatively unexcited, or at least much less excited, about violations of "human rights" by authoritarian or totalitarian anti-American governments. Indeed, the government that gains this privileged status need not even be left-wing, so long as it is clearly anti-American. Note the disproportionate lack of interest in the state of "human rights" in Syria or Iran, as contrasted with the intense interest in Israel.

To this the "human rights" activists reply, with plausibility, that it makes sense for them to direct their energies to situations where it is reasonable to assume that the United States government is capable of exercising some benign influence—and where, therefore, it bears a degree of moral responsibility for failing to exercise this influence. To which the critics retort that the "human rights" activists are themselves guilty of moral turpitude because of their failure to distinguish between what Joshua Muravchik calls "individual abuses" and "systemic deformities," the latter characterizing totalitarian communist regimes as distinct from merely authoritarian regimes. To which the "human rights" spokesmen then reply that this distinction between "totalitarian" and "authoritarian" regimes is a species of "cold war" sophistry, since the suffering of the victim of torture or police brutality under either regime is unvarnished, indistinguishable suffering.

I must confess that, though my sympathies are all with the critics of the "human rights" movement, I find this debate to be essentially sterile. To begin with, the perspective of the victim—whether in war or peace—is the stuff of which poetry (or perhaps theology) is made, not politics, and certainly not foreign policy. To invert Tolstoy's aphorism, all victims are alike in their suffering and humiliation. But not all political regimes in which suffering and humiliation exist are alike. The difference between totalitarian *societies* and authoritarian *governments* is obvious enough—though one of the purposes of focusing on the individual indignities suffered under both regimes is precisely to blur this obvious distinction. True, not all totalitarian societies are identical—there are important national differences that create shades and hues of totalitarianism—nor are they immune to change. But though there may arise an occasional instance where the distinction between an authoritarian and totalitarian policy is less easy to make, the distinction is of crucial significance for an understanding of twentieth-century history and politics.

Authoritarian governments have existed throughout history and may fairly be regarded as *pre*-liberal realities. Whether they are "destined" to become liberal or totalitarian societies, or to evolve into some social form still unimaginable, is an interesting question of political philosophy. But no one can seriously claim that the numerous authoritarian regimes now scattered all over the world constitute any kind of threat to liberal America or the liberal West. Totalitarian societies, on the other hand, are *post*-liberal realities—they emerge out of an explicit rejection of the Western liberal tradition, are the declared enemies of this tradition, and aim to supersede it. It is impossible to write a history of international relations in the twentieth century without making the rise of post-liberal totalitarianism (whether of the right or left) *the* central event of the era, or without making the "cold war" between the liberal democracies and the new totalitarian



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states the central focus around which everything else revolves. It is, in contrast, perfectly possible to write a history of international relations in the twentieth century without ever bothering to mention something called "authoritarianism." In fact, the histories that have been written all do exemplify both this impossibility and this possibility.

It is not an accident that most "human rights" activists, and all "human rights" publicists or theorists, insist on denying either the existence or the importance of the totalitarian-authoritarian distinction. In the abstract, there would seem to be no need for them to do so. There are actually some "human rights" activists who do ignore this whole issue—like the clergy of yesteryear, they are impelled by the simple desire to alleviate human suffering, without paying attention to politics. But these are a minority, even among the clergy of today. The "human rights" *movement* is decidedly political. Its need to obfuscate the totalitarian-authoritarian distinction flows from its political intentions, its desire to deny that the "cold war" is anything but a paranoid fantasy of a bourgeois-capitalist establishment, to minimize the totalitarian threat to liberal-democratic nations, to unnerve American foreign policy by constantly exposing the "immorality" of its relations with authoritarian allies, etc. In short, to repeat: Its purpose—the hidden agenda of its "negative activity"—is the moral disarmament of the bourgeois-capitalist West.

It is interesting, by the way, to note that the "human rights" movement is far less influential in Western Europe, and is taken far less seriously by governments there, than is the case in the United States. No European foreign office has to engage in the idiotic political arithmetic which Congress has imposed on our State Department, whereby every year it solemnly tots up the "human rights" situation in dozens of countries. It is an inherently absurd enterprise. If women in Switzerland don't have the vote, while they do in Rumania, does that make Rumania in any way more respectful of "human rights" than Switzerland? And how does one even apply the concept of "human rights" to Saudi Arabia—a medieval nation rather than a modern state? Why are we so silly as to get involved in this sort of thing, while European governments do not? Are the peoples across the Atlantic less concerned with human rights than we are?

I don't think so. I believe, rather, that the difference is that Western Europe has real, live, important socialist parties, while the United States does not. The result is that those Americans who, in Europe, would belong to socialist or social-democratic parties are forced to channel their political energies into "causes" which, in sum, approximate as closely as possible to those parties' programs. The upshot is that the European left is far more candid than its American counterpart, and has less need for any hidden agendas. When one reads books by European socialists on foreign affairs—the recent writings of Regis Debray can serve as an example—"human rights" is, at most, a very subordinate theme and the theme is sometimes not struck at all. These writings suffer from all kinds of illusions, but they are illusions that flow from avowed ideological convictions. In the United States, where it is imprudent to avow a socialist ideology, those convictions go underground and then emerge in "causes" such as "human rights" or "arms control" or "unilateral nuclear disarmament," which present themselves as apolitical or transpolitical.

Precisely because they seem so nonpolitical or transpolitical, they can actually be more radical in substance. No European country has an Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, whose function is presumably to thwart the militarist proclivities of our Defense Department. Similarly, no European country has an Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, whose function is presumably to thwart the immoral proclivities of our State Department. True, the notion of negotiating an "arms control" agreement with the Soviet Union is at least as popular in Western Europe as in the United States. But in Western Europe this notion is



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often based on a real (or not-unrealistic) anxiety, that a conflict between the two superpowers could easily and quickly result in Western Europe becoming a devastated nuclear battlefield, even if the source of this conflict lies outside Western Europe itself or is marginal to Western European interests. It is this fear that motivates many of the more serious "anti-nuclear" activists over there. In the United States, however, "anti-nuclear" and "arms control" publicists are more akin to the anti-American, pro-Soviet left in Europe. They are persuaded that it is a "cold war" American foreign policy which threatens the world with nuclear devastation, and that a more "conciliatory" (i.e., appeasing) posture toward the Soviet Union and its allies will avert such a catastrophe. They display little fear of Soviet intentions, much fearful anxiety about our own White House, Pentagon, and State Department. It is this distrust of the United States and of its status as a world power—what in Europe would be called "anti-Americanism"—that motivates our more passionate "anti-nuclear" advocates and impels them to support *any* formula acceptable to the Soviets, and to adopt an appeasing mode in foreign policy. Such appeasement is their hidden—not deeply hidden, it must be said—agenda.

There is no other explanation, so far as I can see, for the pertinacity of various leading "arms control" advocates, when by now one would have expected them to be thoroughly disillusioned with the whole affair. This includes many who were involved in the negotiation of the SALT I agreement, an agreement that never would have been signed, never could have been signed, if it had been understood beforehand that the Soviets would promptly install over 500 intermediate-range warheads aimed at Western Europe—something that, it turned out, was permitted (though certainly never envisaged) under the SALT I agreement. The lack of subsequent disillusionment among such knowledgeable people, the fact that their passion for the "arms control process" remains undiminished, is something that requires interpretation.

WHAT MAKES American foreign policy so vulnerable to "human rights" agitation? The explanation is not far to seek: This foreign policy has—must have—an ineradicable moral-ideological component. We are indeed engaged in a profound ideological conflict with the Soviet Union, a conflict that dominates world politics. But it is both a simplification and a distortion to describe it as a conflict about "human rights." It is, rather, a conflict over the very *definition* of "human rights," and the point of this conflict is to determine who will have the *power* to define "human rights" for future generations. In that sense, the United States cannot evade the urgencies and the ambiguities of "power politics."

The relation of such "power politics" to the American "public philosophy" makes for tension and complications in our foreign policy. Realpolitik à la Disraeli is unthinkable in America, since it runs against the very grain of our political ethos. Ours is a nation based on a universal creed, and there is an unquenchable missionary element in our foreign policy. We do aim to "make the world safe for democracy"—eventually, and in those places and at those times where conditions permit democracy to flourish. Every American administration in our history has felt compelled—though some have been more enthusiastic than others—to use our influence, wherever possible, to see that other governments respect our conception of individual rights as the foundation of a just regime and a good society.

On the other hand, only two presidents in our history have tried to emulate Gladstone in making the missionary element the very centerpiece of American foreign policy. The first was Woodrow Wilson, who believed that his enterprise would achieve its success by creating a world organization that in turn would form a "community of nations" pledged to respect the principles we hold dear—with disrespect being curbed by a broadened (Wilson would have said "heightened") definition of international law, to be enforced by this new "world community." It



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was a utopian vision to which many eminent Americans still pay lip service, but which no serious person can any longer take at face value. Today, all that is left of the Wilsonian dream is a host of international organizations that are at best debating societies, at worst sinks of corruption. There is also an array of treaty obligations that the United States thoughtlessly entered into and from which we are now gingerly trying to free ourselves.

The second president, of course, was Jimmy Carter, who fully accepted the expanded version of "human rights" (including social and economic rights) and who then tried to give the American missionary impulse a unilateralist thrust. But he soon was forced to recognize that the world is a complex and recalcitrant place, full of other peoples with other ideas, and that while proclaiming high-minded principles was one thing, unilateral American efforts to reshape world realities according to our national vision were an enterprise necessarily limited in scope—often very limited. The rights of individuals in other lands are a matter of concern for Americans. One may even say it is an integral part of our national interest. But it is usually a concern that claims no centrality in our foreign policy, since it has to be weighed against all those other interests which make up our national interest.

Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, one of the original "human rights" enthusiasts, was not in office more than a month before he felt constrained to issue the following statement:

> We will speak frankly about injustice both at home and abroad. We do not intend, however, to be strident or polemical, but we do believe that an abiding respect for human rights is a human value of fundamental importance and that it must be nourished. We will not comment on each and every issue, but we will from time to time comment when we see a threat to human rights, when we believe it constructive to do so.

Well—yes. If one is willing to stipulate that by "human rights" one means pretty much what used to be called "individual rights," then any American president could have endorsed that statement. Ronald Reagan, I am certain, would be happy to endorse it. The United States (in this respect like the Soviet Union) does *stand* for something in the world and its foreign policy must, to the degree that the world permits, respect the principles of its establishment. But it is the nature of foreign policy to operate, most of the time, in the realm of necessity rather than the realm of freedom. So while it is fair to assert that the ideological basis of American foreign policy gives it a permanent moral dimension which itself delimits the scope of any purely "realistic" policy, these limits have to be broad enough to permit foreign policy to be effective.

Just how broad or narrow these limits are will depend on circumstances. Probably the "purest"—most moral, least self-interested—foreign policy action ever taken on behalf of "human rights" was the British navy's suppression of the slave trade in the nineteenth century. This action was made possible by many factors: Britain's massive superiority in sea power, the unimportance of the "Third World" countries involved, the non-existence (as compared with today) of a complex structure of international law and international organizations. So while Britain's action was wholly admirable, one also has to point out that it was costless, or as close to costless as makes no matter.

It is conceivable that the United States might, one of these days, find itself in a more or less comparable situation, and it is certainly to be hoped that it would then take a comparable action. But such situations are likely to be rare. Like all great nations, the United States does conceive itself as having some kind of "civilizing mission." But, lacking an "imperialist" impulse, we are not usually inclined to accomplish this mission through forceful intervention. Presumably if a Pol Pot regime came to power in Central America and began a genocidal campaign against its own people, we might very well intervene. On the other hand, we did not intervene in Cambodia, nor have we even dreamed of intervening in Africa, where tribal



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genocide is not uncommon. Unilateral military intervention by the United States on behalf of "human rights" would have to overcome resistance from both our enemies and our allies. And steps short of military intervention will almost always be more symbolic than real. True, symbolic action may sometimes be better than no action at all. But over time the impact, both at home and abroad, of a series of mainly symbolic actions will be negligible. Worse, they will be interpreted as a sign of weakness, not strength, of moralistic impotence rather than moral energy.

If this is our situation today—and the experience of the Carter administration has confirmed that it is—why has the message failed to get through to the "human rights" constituency? The reason, I suggest, is that this constituency has its own agenda, and that "human rights" is a useful rhetoric in which to promote it.

A final point: There are some conservative (or non-left) "human rights" activists who feel that this theme can be exploited for purposes of anti-communist and anti-totalitarian propaganda. It is impossible not to admire the diligence with which they expose the sufferings of people under communism, and this kind of candid ideological warfare does serve to remind us of the nature of the enemy—a reminder that is always timely. But there is reason to wonder whether this strategy, on its own, can be effective over the longer term. There cannot be many people who do not already know about conditions in the Soviet Union. The question is: Why don't they care? Why are most of the major Christian churches in the United States so utterly indifferent to the persecution of Christianity in the Soviet Union and in Soviet-occupied Eastern Europe? If this be ignorance, it is a special kind of willful ignorance.

Such willful ignorance, I would suggest, has two sources. First, since the Soviet Union has its own (Marxist) conception of "human rights," about which it is brutally assertive and in no way apologetic, it does seem quixotically futile to criticize it for not sharing our traditional-liberal political philosophy. Second, and more important, there are many who believe the Soviet model is flawed but who nevertheless regard it as a respectable alternative to our own, which they perceive as at least equally flawed, or even flawed to a greater degree. The sad and simple truth is that, once one has lost faith in the traditional-liberal model, one feels deprived of the moral authority to challenge the Soviet model and one then loses all interest in doing so. It is this loss of faith that feeds the organized "human rights" movement, and gives it an "anti-American" bias. To this loss of faith, mere anti-communism is no answer.

There is also a significant cost involved in such an anti-communist "human rights" campaign. To avoid accusations of unprincipled conservative bias, it is inevitably pushed toward making "human rights" a central issue in determining American policy toward South Korea, Chile, Indonesia, the Philippines, etc.—which is, after all, exactly what our anti-American "human rights" activists wish. In effect, the conservative campaign has the unintended consequence of legitimating the "human rights" efforts of the left.

The so-called "human rights" activists inside the Soviet Union—or at least the more sophisticated among them—understand this problem well enough. They certainly do appreciate efforts in the West to alleviate the suffering of those who oppose particular policies of the Soviet system. This is justification enough for such efforts, whatever their limited success. But those activists inside the Soviet Union also have a hidden agenda, one of which I thoroughly approve. To the extent that the "human rights" issue offers them some protection as well as some leverage, they are morally entitled to use it. It is also politically prudent for them to emphasize it. Unfortunately, such hidden agendas are easily read by the Soviet authorities, who have had so much experience in writing them.



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# Grading the War Colleges

Williamson Murray

THE PURPOSE of America's war colleges is embedded in their name: they exist to study war. If they fail in that task, the consequences cannot be overstated: Not only will the lessons of past wars go unlearned; not only will our military leaders be unprepared for future wars; they will not even be capable of recognizing their lack of education, and hence they will be in no position to rectify their own shortcomings.

In recent years there has been considerable discussion about military reform in this country. This debate, if uneven in quality, is what one would expect in a nation still recovering from a defeat in war. The lessons of the war in Southeast Asia should have etched themselves on our consciousness. Unfortunately, they have not. The inability of our military leaders in that conflict to adapt to unexpected conditions or to recognize the nature of a war that was as much political as military was fully matched by the willful ignorance of the political leadership in Washington. Matters are worse today. We have substantially less economic depth or military strength than we had in 1965; our universities have produced a generation of graduates even less knowledgeable about things military; we have a manpower system even less capable of spreading the load of military service throughout our society.

The only place where we can educate a portion of America's leadership for the strategic tasks of the 1990s is at our war colleges. If we do not, we will face a combination of muddle-headed civilian and military leaders, less prepared even than the generation of 1965. We are headed in that direction. If we are serious about military reform, we had better understand that its effects will be temporary at best, *unless* we change the manner in which our officers, particularly at the higher levels, think about their profession and about how they should prepare to fight a war. If we are to have successful, lasting reform of our military establishment, it must begin at the war colleges. One can quibble that proper education should begin earlier; that would be nice, but it is unrealistic. Intellectual reform must begin with the next generation of admirals and generals; if successful there, it will over the long run change values throughout the officer corps.

What are our war colleges doing, what should they be doing, and why are they failing (with one notable exception) to educate the officer corps that we need now, and will need in the future? There are five war colleges: the Naval War College at Newport, Rhode Island; the Army War College at Carlisle, Pennsylvania; the Air War College at Montgomery, Alabama; and the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces in Washington, D.C. (The Naval War College also serves as the war

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college for the Marine Corps.) The military refers to these institutions as senior service schools. For one year, somewhere near the twenty-year point in their military careers, the best of our senior officers are supposed to attend one of these schools. The National War College and the Industrial College draw students from all services, as well as from the State Department, CIA, and other segments of the Washington community. The other three war colleges cater to their own service's officers; all three have exchange officers from other services.

Admiral Stansfield Turner, president of the Naval War College from 1972 to 1974, has summed up what a war college should aim to achieve:

> War colleges are places to educate the senior officer corps in the large military and strategic issues that confront America in the late twentieth century. They should educate these officers by a demanding intellectual curriculum to think in wider terms than their busy operational careers have thus far demanded. Above all the war colleges should broaden the intellectual and military horizons of the officers who attend, so that they have a conception of the larger strategic and operational issues that confront our military and our nation.

How one might achieve such a commendable goal, however, is not an easy question to answer. Clearly the senior service schools themselves are not in agreement, since their curricula and intellectual emphases vary so substantially.

What Turner was suggesting was a program aimed at educating and broadening the officers who attend a war college so that they possess both a historical and a current understanding of strategic and operational issues. Above all, when he was president of the Naval War College, Turner aimed to return the study of war, strategy, and operations to the heart of that institution's curriculum. There has been no comparable effort at the other war colleges over the past thirty years. In fact, in the mid-1970s, at the height of detente, a senior Soviet general, commandant of one of the many war colleges in the Soviet Union, derisively and sarcastically remarked to a group of visiting Army War College students: "Here we study war."

In addition to the general unwillingness to place war and strategy at the heart of their curricula, two basic pedagogical problems plague most of the war colleges. First, they have consistently confused training with education. Sophisticated, intelligent officers, some with Ph.D.s, most with a masters degree, remain in classrooms thirty to thirty-five hours a week. The approach is like that of a military training institution attempting to teach soldiers how to take a tank engine apart. In the latter case, of course, the mechanic needs hands-on experience. But if one wants to educate an individual in the art of strategy or the operational level of war, then one must allow that individual to discover the dimensions of the problem. Strategy cannot be spoonfed—one can only suggest to the student *how* to ask the right questions. The second defect of the war colleges has been the effort, in the space of ten months, to provide future generals and admirals with *everything* they need to know. The result has been a smorgasbord of courses, teaching blocks, and electives that attempt to cover every conceivable subject and end up covering nothing in depth. Moreover, too many courses in international relations, management, and the social sciences mean that war almost entirely disappears from the curriculum.

Given limited time, war colleges face a series of hard choices about what they should teach. The wisest approach, under the circumstances, is to view their courses as a starting point in the education of their students. An ideal war college curriculum would concentrate on two or three subject areas in order to give officers sufficient depth and understanding to continue their professional education in those areas after they return to their careers. Such a war college would concentrate specifically on the study of the military profession in the strategic and operational spheres so that the students understand the larger issues involved in the use of force. It would place the burden of



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learning where it belongs: in the minds of the students. Like a good graduate program, it would demand that its officers read, analyze, and use their judgment.

A war college can only achieve its goal by immersing its students in the study of war, past, present, and future. It must demand that its students become familiar and knowledgeable with strategic issues, understand the complex interplay between strategy, operational realities, policy, and the popular will. This is particularly important in a democratic society like ours, whose political leaders are becoming increasingly ignorant of military institutions, strategy, and the history of war.

That there has been some confusion about goals can be seen in the current mission statement for the Air War College, which proclaims that its purpose is to "prepare select officers for command and staff assignments where they have responsibility for developing, managing, and employing air power as a component of national security." This statement betrays the failing of most of our war colleges over the past quarter century: the general lack of focus in their curricula on the subject of war and strategy. Given the emphasis on management in American defense policy since the years of Robert McNamara, such an approach should not be surprising. The war colleges have focused on technocratic and bureaucratic issues and not on the messy business of war. If we wish to change how our military prepares to support our defense policies, then we are going to have to change that focus.

THE BEST of the war colleges, the Naval War College at Newport, sets the standard by which the other war colleges should be measured. In the early 1970s it went through a substantial revolution, when Admiral Turner was sent to Newport to alter what was for all intents and purposes a pre-retirement home. Like other war colleges, the Naval War College was offering a smorgasbord of courses, inviting numerous admirals, generals, ambassadors to lecture, and providing little intellectual challenge to the students. Turner brought a new curriculum with him and implemented it immediately upon arrival in July 1972. With relatively few changes, it is still in place. This curriculum provides for three distinct semesters, each dealing with issues critical to the education of future military leaders. The emphasis is on strategy and war; the aim is to educate not to train.

The most crucial of these semesters is the strategy and policy course. This semester provides the most detailed examination of war and strategic issues given at any war college in the United States. Within a case study format, it allows students to examine the formulation of strategy from the Greeks to the present. During a fifteen-week semester the course immerses the student in the study of strategy. It is not a military history course; rather it seeks out case studies in history to elucidate and to illuminate how nations have responded to the strategic problems confronting them. Beginning with Thucydides' account of the Peloponnesian War, the course moves through the Napoleonic Wars, Bismarck's triumphs of diplomacy, strategy, and force, and the German strategic approach to both world wars. The course ends with examinations of the cold war, Korea, Vietnam, American nuclear strategy, and the current strategic situation.

The strategy and policy semester is comparative, thorough, and intellectually challenging. The students spend roughly a week on each case study. There are three or four lectures to introduce them to the case study and a three-hour seminar on its implications. The few hours that the students spend in class are more than balanced by a reading load that would stagger most graduate students: 600 to 800 pages per week. In addition, the students write three 8–10 page papers and take mid-term and final examinations. This is an important point: in all three of its semesters the Naval War College grades its students; none of the other war colleges provides any graded exercises for their students, with the result that they have no means to identify excellence.

The strategy and policy curriculum has justifiably acquired a reputation as the pre-



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mier course in the United States, if not the Western world, for the examination of strategy. So high is the Naval War College's reputation that over the course of the past few years it has attracted a number of the best young military historians and political scientists in national security affairs to Newport. The symbiosis between students, faculty, and curriculum (combined with substantial support from the secretary of the navy and the chief of naval operations) has created an extraordinary course and department.

The second major semester at the Naval War College is national security decision making. It has evolved out of a trimester that was largely a management, systems analysis course instituted by Turner in 1972. Like strategy and policy, national security decision making also uses the case study method. As suggested above, all of the war colleges, since the McNamara era, have given heavy emphasis to management and systems analysis in their curricula. What is unique about the national security decision making semester is its sophistication. Through a well-integrated examination of how the United States goes about the business of organizing, equipping, and preparing its military for war, narrow issues of "management" are subordinated to the larger purpose of making students understand how the American defense processes work (with all the warts in full view).

The final semester is now called operations (its original title was "naval operations"). Of the three courses, this has, over the past fifteen years, been the least satisfactory. Unlike the other two it has lacked a sense of purpose and direction. The result has been a series of narrowly focused blocks of instruction. But in the last year and a half, this course has begun to focus on a general and more consistent discussion of the operational art of war. In particular, it has attempted to broaden its approach to include joint operations as well as the operational issues confronting the other services.

Further driving the Naval War College's excellence has been the willingness of Secretary of the Navy John Lehman to provide significant additional resources to Newport. In particular, he has established Secretary of the Navy fellowships to bring the most active publishing scholars in military history and national security affairs to the War College. The promise of an outstanding curriculum, excellent students, and an attractive setting has allowed the navy to capture many of the best minds in America's academic life. Moreover, the fellowships have not been parochially awarded. While the program has not slighted maritime strategic issues, it has aimed at bringing the best strategic minds together to study subjects that range from nuclear strategy to historical issues of strategic interest. Finally, it is worth underlining that the Secretary of the Navy fellowships are designed not to create an ivory tower (or think tank), but rather to involve the fellows actively in lecturing and leading seminars in the core curriculum.

What the Naval War College has managed to achieve on the basis of the Turner revolution is an extraordinary curriculum that challenges the students and gives them the tools for self-education throughout the remainder of their careers. Nevertheless, if the college has achieved pre-eminence among American war colleges, one major problem exists. Until three years ago, the navy sent virtually none of its best officers to Newport. In other words, the navy insured that few future admirals received the benefit of the best war college in the United States. Three years ago, the current chief of naval operations, Admiral James Watkins, and the secretary of the navy made it clear that officers selected *would* attend the Naval War College. The danger, of course, is that when Watkins and Lehman leave office, the navy will slide back into an institutionalized contempt for education. A return to past attitudes would be tragic, particularly since the other war colleges are so much less satisfactory.

THE NATIONAL War College in Washington is supposedly the premier senior service school. Many of America's best officers go there to receive an



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education in interservice issues. Over the past five years National has substantially upgraded its curriculum. In fact, its approach to strategy is substantially modeled on that of the Naval War College (the recent head of its strategy department had played a major role in the reform of Newport in the early 1970s). As at the Naval War College, National does not keep its students in classrooms to an inordinate extent (at least during the strategy and operations phases); it also assigns a heavy reading load of more than 300 pages per week.

Nevertheless, substantial problems remain. National does not enjoy a dedicated emphasis on the study of war, strategy, and the operational art. A substantial portion of its curriculum focuses on international relations, and the study of our national defense has largely been reduced to the workings of the budget cycle. One of the strongest portions of National's curriculum lies in its elective program. The weaknesses of this are, however, substantial—while some students take rigorous, demanding seminars, others coast in seminars dealing with such topics as psychological or physical self-assessments and management courses. The education of National's students is a matter of idiosyncratic choice; it does not rest on the strength of the core curriculum.

Part of National's difficulties results from its location in the nation's capital. Given the availability of speakers in Washington, it has been easy to rely on outsiders to carry the load, thus reducing the institution's need to strengthen its civilian and military faculty. Particularly in the international relations portion of the curriculum, a series of lecturers from the State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency, and myriad other Washington institutions supplant serious education. The lectures, in the words of one former student, hardly ever rise above the level of "dog and pony shows." Moreover, by addressing every international trouble spot the students get a superficial view of the world. Little time is left for the study, examination, and understanding of war.

A substantial portion of National's problems are constitutional. It is not an independent war college, but rather is under an umbrella institution, the National Defense University. That institution also controls the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. The presence of a three star general (or admiral) at the National Defense University makes it difficult for the two star general (or admiral) at the National War College to make substantive changes in the curriculum. It is unlikely that anything like the Turner revolution could occur at National, because entrenched interests would easily find support in the bureaucracy of the National Defense University. The presence of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces further complicates efforts to improve the National War College's curriculum and faculty. The National Defense University, for obvious bureaucratic reasons, sees financial advantages in combining faculties between the two senior service schools under its control. Given the Industrial College of the Armed Forces program, such an approach only further waters down the examination of strategy and war at the National War College. Finally, the competition for resources (both personal and material) between the three institutions insures that the National War College disposes of nothing like the resources that are available at Newport. Since National is supposed to be the premier senior service school, this is unfortunate.

The National War College has clearly upgraded its program. Nevertheless, it has a considerable distance to go if it is to perform its function as a *national* war college. The success of the current reform of the Joint Chiefs of Staff will much depend on how well National educates its students for assignment into the joint arena. Unfortunately, given interservice bickering, it is unlikely that National will get a consistent push to carry out the curriculum reform necessary to provide a challenging examination of war, strategy, and joint operations for its students.

The Industrial College of the Armed Forces has a different charter from the other senior service schools. As its title makes clear,



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it is not a war college. Rather, it was created to educate a portion of our senior military leadership to handle the mobilization of our industrial and manpower resources for a massive conventional war. To that problem, America's foreign and strategic policy has added the difficulties of maintaining and equipping massive military forces for sustained periods of peacetime. The Industrial College of the Armed Forces studies this area in exhaustive detail. Its curriculum is narrowly focused on the procurement and sustaining of our military forces. It turns out officers who can manage acquisition programs and deal with the problems of logistics and mobilization.

Admittedly such issues are crucial for the sustaining of our forces both in peacetime and in war. The problem with the Industrial College of the Armed Forces is not what it teaches, but rather how the services use its graduates. The services view the Industrial College of the Armed Forces as just another senior service school. Attendance at the Industrial College is rarely used as a criteria for selection as a program acquisition manager. Rather, since the services believe that one war college is like another, its graduates receive the same choice of assignments as other war college graduates. Moreover, since the Industrial College is larger than National War College, it exercises greater influence on how the services think about war. As recently as 1985, two of the four members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff were graduates of the Industrial College (the chairman General John W. Vessey and the air force chief of staff General Charles A. Gabriel). This is not to suggest that its graduates are inevitably narrow-minded program managers; but clearly, the institution does nothing to prepare its students for the larger strategic and political issues involved in war. The narrowness of the institution is suggested by an incident several years ago, when the war colleges were making a joint buy of Clausewitz's classic, *On War*. Senior academic officers at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces remained puzzled as to how such a work could possibly fit into their curriculum. Until the services address this basic problem of how to utilize graduates of the Industrial College, there will be substantial difficulty in changing how the American military thinks about war.

THE ARMY War College is a considerable step down from National and in another world entirely from its sister college in Newport. It possesses an excellent faculty: three years ago the army hired one of America's premier military historians. Carlisle, moreover, has a number of other first-class academics and army officers with outstanding academic backgrounds. Unlike the other services, the army has consistently supported the education of its officers in military and strategic studies; therefore, it possesses a considerable reservoir of talent on which to draw.

The problem with Carlisle is not the availability of good faculty. Rather its problem lies in an unimaginative curriculum that almost entirely confuses training with education. Its officers spend most of the week in class (with a couple of afternoons off for "research"). Reading assignments are minuscule compared to the Naval War College's and consist almost entirely of patched-together collections of articles. The students read few books. The strength of the Army War College lies in its elective program, which in turn reflects the excellence of its faculty. A senior army official admitted to me this past year that the curriculum at Carlisle was a "disaster" and that whatever education occurred at the Army War College occurred because of individual student effort and in spite of the curriculum.

The core curriculum is a rabbit warren of classes and lectures. Last year there were no less than eight separate blocks of instruction: (1) Requirements of the Professional Leader, three weeks (self-assessment, senior leadership and command management, ethics and professional values, human dimensions of combat); (2) War, National Policy and Strategy, six weeks (theory of war, national security policy and process, national and military



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strategy, strategic planning); (3) Joint Forces Doctrine, Strategic and Operational Planning, five-and-one-half weeks (war planning, joint forces, operations and doctrine, force capabilities, Soviet studies, decision making exercise); (4) Leadership of the Army and Management of Army Systems, five weeks (resource, develop, acquire, train, sustain, mobilize, force integration exercise, mobilization exercise); (5) Regional Appraisals, two-and-one-half weeks (Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas, Middle East/Southwest Asia, Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union); (6) Application of Power: Theater Forces, five weeks (contingency planning, theater employment planning, operational concepts, theater exercises); (7) Advanced Courses (electives with everything from "The Birth of the Blitzkrieg: The Interplay of Doctrine, Personality and Technology, 1916–1940" to "Fitness of the Army" and "Civilian Personnel Management"); and finally, (8) U.S. Global Military Strategy, one week (critique of mid-range defense policy, strategy, and force planning, strategy formulation exercise).

Unfortunately, the Army War College is not instructing high school students or basic trainees. The motivated, intelligent, and well-educated senior officers who are its students do not get a core curriculum that challenges or responds to their drives or interests. Nor does Carlisle provide them with the educational tools they need for their careers. Part of the problem has been the general unwillingness of the army to assign commandants to the Army War College who possess the background or intellectual perception to understand what a war college should accomplish. One recent commandant even suggested to the students that "they were on a sabbatical." Like the National War College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces, there is no grading of the students at Carlisle.

To fix the Army War College would require little more than a perception that its purpose is to *educate* its student body in war and strategy by means of a demanding curriculum. The army would, of course, have to recognize that education is not training but rather an intellectually challenging examination of fundamental issues. And such a recognition would have to lead to a revolutionary revision of the curriculum. All this will require a commandant of academic vision with support from the army's high command.

The Air War College has had the justifiable reputation as one of the weakest of the war colleges. That reputation reflects a general lack of interest within the air force, a location removed from any significant intellectual center, and a curriculum that rivals Carlisle's for its confusion of training with education. Ironically, the only graduate of the Air War College who has become the head of his service is a marine: General P. X. Kelley. Unfortunately, the air force does not have the depth of strategic expertise in its officer corps that the army does, since it has not supported the education of its officers in military history or strategic studies to the extent that the army has. The air force has plenty of engineers, technocrats, and management experts, but few officers knowledgeable in strategy, war, or the history of joint operations. Consequently, there are no quick fixes available for the Air War College. There is considerable irony here. Unlike the navy, the air force has been adamant that its officers attend a war college if they hope to reach general officer rank. Moreover, even to be promoted to colonel, most air force officers must complete the Air War College by correspondence. This desire to emphasize what the air force calls "professional military education" has not been matched by a willingness to provide a serious intellectual curriculum at Maxwell or the resources necessary to support such a curriculum. Hence, the Air War College lacks the resources, interest, and support to provide anything more than a simplistic course of study.

Two years ago the secretary of the air force established a blue-ribbon panel to make the Air War College the "best of the war colleges." Neither the secretary nor the senior air force leadership fully recognized how



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far their war college had to go. The curriculum is a mixture of courses: from strategy to international relations, to watered-down University of Auburn management. As at Carlisle, students spend most of their time in class. Reading assignments are minimal compared to the Naval War College, and there are no exams or graded papers.

In the late 1970s there were substantial efforts to upgrade the Air War College. Maxwell saw a significant increase in the time spent addressing war, strategy, and the operational art. But the reformers eventually left Maxwell, and their changes never came close to altering the curriculum in a fashion similar to Turner's revolution at the Naval War College. Interestingly, the current re-examination of the Air War College has resulted in some positive changes; but again they do not address the fundamental confusion of education with training.

Part of the problem is that the Air War College, like National, and unlike the Naval and Army War Colleges, is not an independent vehicle. It is directly under the Air University, and a general is at the head of each. A major change in Maxwell's curriculum is thus impossible unless both men are in agreement on the changes, or unless there is substantial outside pressure. Given attitudes in the air force, neither case is likely.

The fate of the upgrading effort initiated by the secretary of the air force suggests the difficulties that the Air War College faces. In response, the air force has established a few senior civilian professorships and has convinced itself that replacing its classroom lieutenant colonel instructors with full colonels is the way to upgrade its military faculty. These are not substantial reforms. Until the air force reforms its basic approach at Maxwell, it will not possess a serious, intellectually challenging war college.

I spent a year at Maxwell as a research associate during the 1980–81 academic year. I spent the 1985–86 academic year at the Naval War College. I found most of the students at both institutions outstanding. They are bright, motivated, and interested in their profession. Moreover, they are far more realistic and balanced in their judgment than graduate students in civilian institutions. They have been in the real world and they have a sense of how it works. They deserve the best education that a war college can offer. At the Naval War College I found the students extraordinarily motivated and responsive to an intellectually stimulating curriculum. One *always* found students working late or on weekends at Newport; in my entire year at Maxwell I virtually *never* saw a student in the library or in the college after duty hours. Their lack of interest reflected the deficiencies of the curriculum, not their intellectual capabilities.

MILITARY REFORM is indeed a crucial issue. How well we meet the challenge may well be essential to our survival as a nation. Unfortunately, we believe that change and reform must be rapid; moreover, we have tended to confuse tinkering with administrative structure with the process of substantive long-range reform. This is a fundamental error. Thus, whatever the advantages of the recently completed reform of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that reform does not address the problem of the intellectual orientation of the great majority of our generals and officers. Until we address that issue, we will not be able to change how our services look at preparedness, force employment, and war. The war colleges represent virtually the only vehicle with which to change that intellectual orientation. Until they become intellectually demanding institutions, our prospects for substantive, serious military reform are dim indeed.



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# Changing South Africa—a Choice of Weapons

Fleur de Villiers

THE INTERNATIONAL crusade for punitive sanctions against South Africa has won its first major victory—and claimed its first victims. The overwhelming vote by Congress to override President Reagan's veto of the Lugar bill was pre-eminently a victory for the African National Congress and its acolytes who have campaigned for sanctions in the callous, if mistaken, belief that they will shorten the fuse on revolution in South Africa. It was a victory for those who needed to rally the Democratic party and public opinion on one of the few issues where, because of the conspicuous failure of constructive engagement, the Reagan administration appeared weak and vulnerable. But for those who have supported sanctions because they believed or were persuaded that there was no viable alternative, it has been a victory for the politics of fatigue, frustration, and failure.

In the final days of the 99th Congress, a slogan finally left the streets, the pickets, and the campuses and became a policy. Once again, and once again with the best will in the world, the United States has committed itself to folly, based on a fundamental misperception of the world beyond its borders. If sanctions begin to bite, there will be victims—the black South Africans and their families who will lose their livelihood, and possibly their lives. But the successful passage of the Lugar bill has already claimed some prominent victims. President Reagan, suffering his first major foreign policy defeat, is the most obvious, for the administration has now finally and permanently lost control over U.S. policy towards Pretoria.

The sanctioneers in Congress will not be long content with the first *tranche* of anti-Pretoria measures. Following the time-honored foreign policy principle that if at first you don't succeed, fail, fail again, further and more heroic doses of the same medicine will certainly be demanded and applied until all hope of internal reform in Pretoria is smothered, white attitudes harden under external threat, and polarization becomes terminal. And if the Lugar bill has emasculated White House control over this area of foreign policy, it has by the same token claimed another victim in the Department of State which, in the last few months before the Senate vote, was reduced to a desperate attempt at damage limitation, trying to synchronize sanctions with Britain and stiffen Bonn's spine, thus keeping punitive measures to the minimum with which President Reagan could live, however uncomfortably. In the end, its efforts

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were in vain. Reagan was torpedoed, not by Chancellor Kohl or Mrs. Thatcher but by American legislators. Washington having broken ranks with its two major allies, it is now inevitable that Thatcher and Kohl, however reluctantly and against their own material interest, will be compelled eventually to bring their measures into line with those of the U.S. Congress.

If they are undeserving victims of this latest example of passion masquerading as policy, Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker, who invested his reputation, six years of his life, and his political credibility in constructive engagement, is arguably the biggest loser—outside the borders of Southern Africa itself. Certainly, he has long been the main target of those who believed it was possible to conjure up a solution to one of the world's most complex problems with all the careless élan of a short order cook.

Crocker's policy, constructive engagement, deserved to succeed. Carefully reasoned, subtly tuned, and dispassionately argued, it was based on a close knowledge of the peculiar dynamics of South African politics, on a faith in the self-reforming process that had already begun within the white and particularly the Afrikaner community, on an awareness of South Africa's ability to sow peace or havoc in the entire subcontinent, and on a keen awareness that American leverage to influence events within the country itself was extremely limited. That leverage had been further weakened by the rhetoric of the Carter years; the United States was eventually perceived by both white and black South Africans to shout very loudly and carry an extremely small stick.

But constructive engagement failed—and for once failure has many fathers. Among them are enemies on the extreme right, who sought from the Reagan administration nothing less than a strategic embrace of Pretoria, and foes on the left and within the Republican party, who demanded that constructive engagement produce within a few years a list of the internal changes it had wrought in South Africa. It was useless to argue that no foreign policy worthy of the name could or should be submitted to so simple a pass/fail test. The desire for a quick fix of a problem that by then had entered every American home on the nightly news became the overriding imperative. And in this Crocker fell victim to the essential paradox in his thesis. Its underlying philosophy was that United States leverage was limited, that South Africa would be changed by South Africans or not at all. But it also promised by implication more than could be given—that the United States could play a critical role in effecting that change. Under pressure, the administration was thus reduced to claiming credit for reforms that had everything to do with internal pressures and nothing to do with American diplomacy (claims which infuriated Pretoria and made it even less susceptible to Dr. Crocker's charms), or for concessions so minor when measured against the demands of the administration's foes on the left that they were ridiculed.

GIVEN THE PRESSURE in Washington to produce results, given equally that it is against the perceived interest of the Nationalist government in Pretoria ever to admit to the Afrikaner right that it is dancing to a foreign tune, it was perhaps inevitable that the policy would self-destruct. That process was certainly hastened by events in South Africa that appeared to cry out for active foreign intervention, for rebuke and punishment.

There is some irony, however, in the fact that the endless pilgrimages to Pretoria by high profile foreign peacemakers in 1986 were almost certainly a major factor in persuading President Botha finally to slam the brakes on the reform process that he had begun six years before. The effect of the flurry of diplomatic demands was to persuade both him, and that section of his constituency to which he is most sensitive, that nothing less than a transfer of power to the ANC was the world's minimum requirement for readmission to the international club. He had received little international credit for sacrificing Afrikaner



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unity and a sizable slice of his constituency for what the world insisted on calling cosmetic change. The goal posts had moved, and a man who had backed into reform and been carried along by its momentum now had to deal with that "final demand."

His answer was almost as predictable as it was lamentable: a blunt rejection of all further efforts at mediation, the reimposition of the state of emergency, at least partially to reassure his right wing, and a brutal reassertion via the raids on Gaborone, Lusaka, and Harare of South African power in the region. It also put an end to the years of Crocker's much quieter diplomacy. It was equally predictable that the sanctions crusaders, their zeal reinforced by events in South Africa and through skillful manipulation of world opinion by an ANC which correctly perceives reform as the enemy of the revolution it seeks, would rush in to fill the vacuum and give the United States a South African policy worthy of its morality.

Beyond the evanescent flush of righteousness, however, it is difficult to discover precisely what they hope sanctions will achieve. For some—the hard-eyed radicals of the far left—use of sanctions is based on the belief that they will so increase want and deprivation among South African blacks that, out of desperate need to shorten their suffering, they will move from sporadic insurrection to all-out rebellion. If sanctions are war by other means, the men in Lusaka, having failed to prosecute their guerrilla war against South Africa with any degree of success, have already selected their surrogate cannon fodder—the millions of black South Africans and migrants from the Frontline states who daily vote with their feet by flocking to the factories and mines of the only successful industrial economy in Africa. Their argument has at least the virtue of honesty, even if it ignores the cardinal fact that people in an extremity of want, without jobs and without food, are usually so obsessed with material survival that they lapse into political apathy and are extremely difficult to mobilize.

Other motives are paradoxically more difficult to defend, ranging as they do from the fact that the South African problem has now become such a high profile domestic issue in the United States that a pro-sanctions stance is a low cost vote-getter in congressional or state elections, to the meaningless slogan that it is important for the United States to "get on the right side of history," and the pervasive, uneasy sense that America's own racist history, only partially redeemed, demands a "moral" response to South Africa's problems. All this is underpinned by an assumption (which is belied by the history of sanctions wherever they have been applied) that somehow, in an as yet undefined way, external threat and isolation will persuade Pretoria to see the error of its ways.

Even Malcolm Fraser, who has developed a new role for himself as the world's leading sanctions salesman, admits that his chosen remedy has only a 50 percent chance of persuading white South Africa to alter course. South African liberals like Helen Suzman and Alan Paton, who better understand the temper of the times in their own country, have reacted with dismay, not only because they find it infinitely more difficult than Mr. Fraser to contemplate mass black unemployment with equanimity, but because they see a hardening under external threat of white South Africa's resistance to change. Nevertheless, in this classic case of the confusion of means and ends, the argument that sanctions are the wrong instrument for the wrong task becomes almost immaterial. Indeed in this whole matrix of motives, means and ends have become so inextricably confused that it is impossible to discern when sanctions now imposed will be lifted.

It is therefore equally difficult to see when, if ever, President Reagan or his successor will be able to regain control and direction over American policy towards a South Africa that is not ruled by Oliver Tambo or his successor. And so it is safe to predict that the sanctions horse, now finally out of the stable, will soon be out of control. Is it equally safe to predict that in a few years



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time those who saddled it will feel at least a twinge of responsibility and regret for the chaos it has wrought? For the evil that politicians do—especially in the name of good—lives on in the foreign fields they seldom visit and never understand, long after they have satisfied the momentary itch for a moral high. It is therefore important to examine what sanctions will and will not achieve.

EVIDENCE IS ALREADY accumulating that sanctions will not bring white South Africa to the negotiating table. Instead, at a unique moment in history when the forces for change within were beginning to outweigh the forces of reaction, sanctions have begun to tip the scales the other way.

It was predictable that President Botha's utterances over the past few months would for the first time draw the bottom line on reform. The equation which the government has made and which the electorate is making in growing numbers is a false one, but it is nonetheless persuasive to people who see their security threatened. It is this: reform was respectable when it was generated by pressures within South Africa itself. It ceased to be politically attractive when it could be portrayed by the far right as a concession to external demands. So the left has achieved its first objective. The stumbling process of relatively peaceful change is being halted, an already fractured society is being further and perhaps terminally polarized.

Thus have sanctions and the threat of sanctions as a means of producing an atmosphere conducive to a negotiated peace in South Africa already failed. South African business, which for the past few years has been at the cutting edge of the reform process, now sees itself as the undeserving first victim of the sanctioneers, and its attention is being diverted from pushing for further and more fundamental change to the immediate, politically safer and more absorbing challenge of sanctions-busting. The growing voices of dissent from the moderate center within the white electorate, and within the governing party, which were being heard early in 1986, have been stilled as white South Africans rally once again round the flag of national unity—a phenomenon that observers believe will be dramatically demonstrated during the general election, which will probably be held early in 1987.

Far from bringing white South Africa to the conference table, sanctions will have precisely the opposite effect. But let there be no doubt about what they will achieve. They will not stop South African exports from reaching the outside world—albeit at a premium. Sanctioneers may reflect ruefully on the fact that it was the United Nations arms embargo that not only made South Africa almost self-reliant in arms production but taught it the art of sanctions-busting (today it is one of the world's major arms exporters). By the same token, sanctions will lead to import substitution in South Africa, which will in turn produce a brief, but confidence-building boost to its flagging economy. They will lead to a loss of jobs in the sanctioning countries. They will lead to a substantial increase in black unemployment in South Africa—already running at 60 percent in some areas—and a consequent increase in deprivation and human suffering.

One of the most frequently quoted justifications for sanctions is that they are not merely the chosen weapon of the ANC, but have been demanded by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and other black leaders within South Africa itself. The argument appears unanswerable: if black South Africans demand sanctions, who are we to deny them their suffering? It is difficult to answer without being accused of an *ad hominem* attack on the Archbishop of Cape Town, but it must be said that those who call most stridently for sanctions are not those who will lose their daily bread if they are applied. They are churchmen, trade union and party officials, all guaranteed a secure living. They are the "comrades," school children sustained by their parents. In an article published by the Center for Applied Social Sciences at the University of Natal (August 1986), Professor Lawrence Schlemmer meticulously examined



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every survey of black South African opinion on the issue of divestment, boycott, and sanctions, and discovered that

> only a minority of around one quarter or less of blacks in major metropolitan areas would support total disinvestment or full economic boycotts. Their reasons, as my surveys and others have shown, are simply that they would not wish to endure collective economic punishment in the sanctions process . . . it is certainly true that a majority of black spokespeople, members of the middle class intelligentsia, students and clergymen support sanctions. This is not surprising since their interests are political rather than economic. They would undoubtedly benefit from an economic collapse if it means a consequent collapse of the South African government—an unlikely outcome.

Professor Schlemmer is not a supporter of the South African government, but South Africa's leading psephologist, a past president of the South African Institute of Race Relations, and a man with unimpeachable liberal credentials.

Should they succeed and lead to economic collapse, sanctions will reduce the only successful industrial economy in Africa to yet another Third World basket case, dependent on a massive injection of Western aid to save not only South Africa itself, but the network of surrounding states, which are critically dependent on migrant workers' remittances for much if not all of their GDP and on trade with and through South Africa to keep their tottering economies alive. Sanctions do not have to be effective or universal to collapse those fragile economies—as studies by those states' own governments have shown. Recent confidential estimates by Zimbabwe have shown that it is 85 percent dependent on trade with or through South Africa. African leaders who call loudly for sanctions admit privately that "they will kill us," that hopes to reduce dependence on South Africa by upgrading the Beira and Tanzara rail links are expensive pipedreams, and that no amount of Western aid is going to help them pay for their rhetoric. Which is why it is becoming ever more doubtful whether Zimbabwe or Zambia will actually live up to their rhetoric and apply the sanctions they seek from the West. Other "Frontline states" such as Mozambique and Botswana have already said that sanctions are a luxury they cannot afford.

With the South African problem now firmly ensconced in the domestic political arena in Britain, the United States, and Europe, it is not enough, however, to point out that sanctions are at best a means that will not achieve the desired end and, at worst, are a prescription for political and economic disaster. One has to suggest a viable alternative—and there is one at hand. It has already been dubbed a Marshall Aid Plan for South Africa—a title that is probably unhelpful and confusing, especially as Jesse Jackson has since hijacked the phrase to denote a rescue operation for the Frontline states that has no hope of success. But whatever it is called, it could be said to represent a variation of "constructive engagement"—with one important difference.

Constructive engagement sought to engage the South African government. A Marshall Plan instead pushes Pretoria to the periphery and seeks constructive engagement with the South African people themselves, both black and white. It accepts that the only successful pressures for change are those generated within South Africa which have the willing support of the majority of whites, and it seeks to increase those pressures by offering whites (if not the government) an alternative to isolation, and blacks an alternative to deprivation.

Unlike sanctions which, whether total or partial, effectively deprive the West of any further leverage over an isolated and increasingly intransigent Pretoria government, this sort of aid will require continuing commitment, concern, and involvement. For those who see morality as a fit base and purpose of foreign policy, it should therefore have a greater appeal than sanctions, which seek to solve a problem by turning a collective back on it. Such a policy also has a firmer base in history.



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IT IS A Marxist shibboleth that capitalism is the handmaiden of apartheid and that economic growth and investment merely prop up the apartheid society. South Africa's recent history has shown the reverse to be true. Apartheid first began to crumble under the pressures of a high economic growth rate, when the demand for a skilled and stable work force led first to the scrapping of job reservation and then inexorably to the recognition of urban blacks as a permanent community rather than the "temporary sojourners" they had been dubbed by apartheid's arch ideologue, former Prime Minister H. F. Verwoerd. This led in turn to the granting of freehold rights in so-called "white South Africa" and eventually to the abolition this year of influx control (the pass laws). Inevitably, black aspirations fanned by reform and frustrated by its limits began to concentrate on the ultimate goal—full political rights—but it is fair to say that the process would have been delayed were it not for the liberalizing effects of economic growth.

It is an uncomfortable irony that, because of a prolonged and deepening recession, aggravated by the withdrawal of foreign investment, South Africa's economic growth has now dwindled to less than 2 percent a year, while its population is growing at an annual 2.3 percent. Instead of being starved of foreign capital, South Africa needs a growing source of funds if apartheid, once banished from the statute books, is not to survive as gross economic inequity under this government or indeed under any future black one. It has been conservatively estimated that South Africa needs to create a million jobs a year if it is to begin to absorb the growing pool of black unemployed. Last year, as foreign capital dried up, 500,000 blacks lost their jobs. If the proposed boycott of South African iron and steel exports is effective, they could be joined by a substantial proportion of the 450,000 black workers in those industries. Those workers in turn support 2.5 million people in South Africa and the neighboring states. The United States ban on coal imports could lead to a loss of many of the 35,000 jobs that support 175,000 people. The boycott of South African agricultural products will reduce the 446,000 jobs that support 2.2 million workers and their families. It is improbable, however, that the international marketplace, having taken a view on the security of its South African investments, is of a mind to reverse that decision (especially as sanctions place those investments in even greater jeopardy), or that Western governments should so defy the current mood that they release loan funds to Pretoria.

The answer instead is surely for Britain, the United States, and Europe to join in an offer of massive aid to black South Africa to create its own infrastructure, its own services, and its own institutions, to promote the growth of entrepreneurship, self-help, and self-employment in the black community, thus making it less dependent on government funds and less subject to government control. Such a program would create an alternative society far better equipped and motivated to claim its political future than an apathetic society of the unemployed, in which black trade unions would lose their political muscle and people would become obsessed with their material survival.

An example of the sort of agency well targeted for foreign aid is already in place. The Urban Foundation, funded by the private sector but under multiracial control and dedicated to the creation of viable black communities, has proved a major instrument for social and political change. It is also the one institution that has managed to retain its credibility with the black population and remain untouched by the deep animosities and rivalries within black politics.

The Foundation—which has fundraising offices in the U.S.—was formed in 1977 in the wake of the Soweto riots by a unique amalgamation of the forces of Afrikaner and English business. Among its manifold and diverse achievements of the past nine years have been to persuade the government to abandon influx control and the freezing of black urban township development, to halt shack demolition and forced removals, and to



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accept and upgrade squatter settlements and recognize them as an inevitable part of Third World urbanization.

Its major contribution has been to black housing and community development. In 1986 alone the Foundation mobilized 100 million rand ($20 million) to service and develop housing sites, to manage self-help housing schemes, and to build houses in the major metropolitan areas. The completed value of these projects will be 608 million rand ($120 million). It is active in providing access to employment opportunities, and is involved in every aspect of education, from preschool development to upgrading black teaching and supplying schools, classrooms, and technical workshops. It is at present leading the assault on the government's separate education policy and the retention of separate group residential areas. With influx control abandoned and black urbanization officially acknowledged, its role could be greatly enlarged through an injection of foreign aid.

Similar local agencies could be formed to create an alternative, non-racial private education system (focusing particularly on improved secondary education and intensive teacher training), for agricultural assistance and training, for a network of hospitals and clinics, for social and community services, and for agencies to help and to train the black entrepreneur.

As an exercise primarily in self-help, many of these agencies could interlock, as black skills and black labor are developed and employed to create the infrastructure for black South Africa. In 1987 the United States will supply $611 million dollars in economic and military aid to Africa; Somalia, for instance, will receive $115 million. A Marshall Plan for South Africa would require at most no more than $150 million, which at the current rate of exchange could be translated into 666 million financial rand (the original Marshall Plan cost $12 billion over four years). South Africa has the capacity and the infrastructure to ensure that—unlike most Third World aid—this seed money will not sink unnoticed into the African desert, but rather create a more secure and confident future for black South Africans.

It is of course probable that such a program will antagonize the South African government. The availability of housing funds would create pressure for the proclamation of more townships in metropolitan South Africa and the repeal of the Group Areas Act, which keeps blacks penned into racial ghettos. The spread of private, integrated schools and colleges would fly in the face of the government's prohibition on mixed education—a prohibition, however, which today is applied only in state schools.

Well-targeted help to rural blacks could create pressures for the proclamation of land for black farmers outside the homelands. As a well-publicized alternative to sanctions the plan could thus serve another political purpose. It would confront Pretoria over the last remaining elements of structural apartheid—separate schools and residential areas. A large and growing section of President Botha's own supporters disagrees with his intransigence on these issues. It could thus lure a possibly critical body of white opinion out of the laager into which it is now retreating under the threat of sanctions, and make it more responsive to outside influence.

THERE IS a substantial element within the National party that is deeply disenchanted with the government's inability to grasp the nettle of further, fundamental political reform. Powerful voices in the Afrikaner community were raised early in 1986, urging the creation of a multiracial transitional government of national unity. But internal disaffection does not flourish under external threat.

If, instead of threatening isolation, the world were to offer a viable alternative, making acceptance of this kind of help and investment the price of South Africa's readmission to the international community, and if Pretoria were to reject it, the tide of white opinion could swing against a recalcitrant government and against all those who would



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prefer isolation to negotiation. A Marshall Plan could thus become the catalyst that would create the conditions for real negotiation between South Africa's polarized communities. A program of aid such as this will doubtless be attacked by the left as offering disguised help to Pretoria to shore up the apartheid regime. If properly packaged and presented as a diplomatic offensive and alternative to sanctions, it could achieve the exact opposite. Moreover, as an attempt to provide a climate in which moderation can flourish and moderate black and white South Africans find each other and their path to a democratic government, it is essential that its proponents ignore attacks from both the extreme left and the extreme right—neither of which favors moderation or democracy.

In answering these charges, however, it is important to point out that the plan does not embody a new principle. That principle is already enshrined—under the rubric of aid to the victims of apartheid—in the Lugar bill, in Commonwealth resolutions, and in statements by the EEC Council of Ministers. The amounts—$40 million a year in economic aid in the Lugar bill for "disadvantaged South Africans" and considerably less in EEC aid—are derisory. But the principle has been accepted and the funds represent a start. The total bill would also represent a fraction of the billions of dollars that would have to be poured into South Africa once sanctions and their political effects reduced it to an economic wasteland. But because of the way in which the Lugar aid is packaged and presented—as conscience money and an apologetic excuse for not going further down the sanctions road—it has been overlooked by the media and the public.

If it were removed from the sanctions package and presented separately, a positive, coherent, and well-publicized aid policy would not merely recapture the moral high ground from the sanctions lobby but win support from growing numbers of people who are beginning to realize that sanctions are a high-cost formula for disaster, and who are desperately casting around for an alternative.

The final objection is that the international tide of opinion has swung so far behind punitive sanctions that a plan such as this will be dismissed as too little too late. That is a counsel of despair. If support cannot be won for a policy that offers not decreasing leverage, but greater influence, challenge rather than destruction, then the West will have to live with the consequences of its impatience. Its desire to get South Africa off its conscience and the international menu, whatever the cost, could eventually involve the positioning of peacekeeping forces in the Frontline states and the Lebanonization of South Africa. To borrow Sir Geoffrey Howe's phrase, it should not require a quantum leap of the imagination to realize that there is a better way.



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# The State Department & Nicaragua

Max Singer

ON CHRISTMAS DAY in 1950 UN forces in Korea were being chased southward by the Chinese communist "volunteer" army. Our military headquarters in Korea, in Japan, and in Washington saw no military basis for the UN to be able to hold off the Chinese onslaught, except perhaps back at the small Pusan beachhead at the bottom of the peninsula. The policy debate centered around such great issues as whether Chiang Kai-Shek should be "unleashed," whether we should use nuclear weapons, and whether we were foolish to try to fight a land war on the mainland of Asia.

Then General Matthew Ridgeway was named the UN military commander (his predecessor had been killed in a jeep accident). Within seven weeks Ridgeway turned the tide and stopped the enemy. Within five months the Chinese army and two armies of replacements were defeated, and the UN forces had an open path northward. What made the difference?

Ridgeway displayed no strategic genius. He was given no resources that were not expected before he came. There was no change in the geopolitical balance of forces. All that happened was that Ridgeway made the U.S. forces in Korea fight competently. He got the officers to do what their manuals prescribed, and what they had been taught at their schools. (Ridgeway's description of how he influenced his army consists of such exotica as: adjacent units should support each other; occupy high ground; prepare a defensive perimeter before going to sleep at night; stick to the schedule when making an offensive; make action reports truthful and complete.)

When we were losing in Korea everybody assumed that, since our army was not winning, the reason must be that in the prevailing circumstances it could not win. Nobody complained about the technical competence of our military leadership (although there were plenty of complaints about MacArthur's political-military decisions). People paid attention only to the "big picture." But when Ridgeway came in, it turned out that ordinary technical competence was enough to make the difference between defeat and victory. And then practically nobody noticed that the outcome of the Korean war had been reversed by increasing our operational competence.

IS IT POSSIBLE that in foreign policy, too, competence (in this case diplomatic) can in some circumstances make the difference between defeat and victory? Is it possible that when countries whose inter-

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ests are parallel to ours support our enemies we should question the performance of our diplomats? Is it possible that the ideological and political "big picture" is not a complete explanation for the fact that the Western democracies—and the mainstream church organizations, and congressional Democrats—are supporting anti-Western tyranny in Nicaragua?

I believe that the answer to all those questions is "yes," and that most people would be as shocked at how little we have done to gain political support for the democratic resistance in Nicaragua as they would by the way our army in Korea was being led before Ridgeway took over. I think that a key part of the explanation of the strikingly anomalous world political line-up on the civil war in Nicaragua is our failure to take ordinary and obvious measures, the diplomatic equivalent of the standard military measures that turned things around in the Korean war.

This judgment does not amount to putting all the blame on the State Department. Many responsible leaders around the world have had the power to make a difference. So far most have failed to do what they could and should; there is more than enough blame to go around. Recognizing the shortcomings of our diplomatic performance does not absolve any one—neither the Costa Ricans and Venezuelans, nor the congressional Democrats, nor the French and Swedes, nor the churches, academics, and press. And certainly the failures of our friends do not reduce the primary guilt of our enemies.

Nor does this article claim that George Shultz is incompetent (much less disloyal or soft on communism). The point is not that the State Department is hopeless. On the contrary, while some people say that complaints about State Department performance are a waste of time because State has always been the way it is, and could not be any different, the facts presented here are consistent with the more useful view that, although the Department has some institutional preferences that tend to lead it in the wrong direction, these can be overcome by strong purposeful leadership. The key responsibility of State's leaders must be to specify external accomplishments for their principal subordinates, which they are expected to achieve, and to reward successful performance of such tasks—rather than evaluating people by in-house procedural and stylistic criteria.

THE FOLLOWING BELIEFS were widely—but not universally—held in the Carter State Department: that the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN) was not controlled by a Leninist group; that some form of communism, or revolution more radical than El Salvador's, was inevitable and necessary for Central America; and that the United States could make a pragmatic accommodation with "revolutionary" regimes in the region, because the economic needs of those regimes would compel them to take a middle line between the U.S. and the Soviet Union. During the Reagan administration these views have never prevailed in the Latin America Bureau of State (ARA), or in the Department as a whole, but they did not disappear with the change of administration. Individuals who held them continued to occupy positions in ARA and the Department, and for at least three or four years the old thinking continued to affect the implementation and expression of policy, even though it no longer set the policy. (Such ideas—with minor alterations—seem to have migrated since then to the Africa Bureau.)

At least during Reagan's first term, the view prevailed in the Department that the FSLN could not be replaced, and that the only feasible goal for the U.S. was therefore to induce the Sandinistas to agree not to commit aggression against their neighbors—and to promise again to install democracy. This conclusion was based partly on the judgment that there could not be enough domestic support for a U.S. policy of trying to replace the FSLN. An agreement with the Sandinistas was thought to be an acceptable objective because, it was argued, either the FSLN would have to stick to the agreement,



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or their breach of the agreement would be clear enough to create the political support necessary for action against them.

The president rejected this conclusion. He believed that, in the end, the FSLN would probably have to be replaced. Nevertheless, he agreed that U.S. policy should be stated in terms of the diplomatic objective of inducing the Sandinistas to fulfill their promise to install a democratic government. This for two reasons: first because it is right to try for a peaceful solution, however slight its chances appear to be; and second, because, in any case, part of Congress and the public would oppose any policy that did not do so.

Most informed people—especially those most critically concerned, the Central Americans—were aware that the official U.S. policy contained two contradictory elements. We said (a) that we were pursuing a diplomatic solution and (b) that the solution must include the fulfillment of the Nicaraguan promise of democracy. Realists understood that only one of these goals could be achieved, because the Sandinistas would never willingly fulfill their promise to govern democratically. Therefore, it was necessary to decide which was the primary goal, and which goal was really just a hope that would have to be sacrificed.

The Latin American countries we are talking about are very familiar with the practice of stating national policy partly in terms of hopes that no one expects can be fulfilled. There is no inherent problem in doing that. Indeed, a political style that sets great store on appearances and domestic considerations, and that is characterized by a strong inclination to delay the recognition of unpalatable truths, often requires that nations express policy in terms of unrealistic hopes.

The problem is that during much of the Reagan administration the State Department has believed that the fulfillment of Nicaragua's commitment to democracy is the pious hope, and that the operational goal is a diplomatic solution—perhaps one that includes unenforceable new Sandinista promises about democracy. The president, on the other hand, has repeatedly demonstrated to the Department—by overruling its proposals or actions—that his serious operational goal, which he believes is the only one that can ensure peace in Central America, is a democratic government in Nicaragua, even if it proves to be the case that this cannot be attained by agreement with the Sandinistas.

There have been two unfortunate results of our formal policy having these incompatible goals. One is that many in Central America think the *contras* will not win because the State Department's emphasis on agreement is the real policy of our government and that eventually the *contras* will be sacrificed for an agreement with the Sandinistas. The second is that the congressional Democrats are able to argue that the president's talk about a diplomatic solution to the conflict is deceitful, and that he is really determined to have a military victory. In fact, what he is determined to have is a democratic victory: by negotiation if possible, but by *contra* military efforts combined with economic and political war against the Sandinistas, if necessary.

Therefore one of the major reasons why our diplomacy has been ineffective has been the reluctance of the State Department to do anything that conflicted with its own primary goal—an agreement—even though that has meant failing to work effectively to achieve the president's primary goal—a genuinely independent and democratic regime in Nicaragua. The limited effectiveness of the Department's effort to convince the world of the true character of the Sandinistas and to build support for the *contras* has reflected this state of affairs. Key people have believed that the best we could do was to reach an agreement with the Sandinistas that would leave them in power and the *contras* out in the cold. While this belief has lost ground in ARA since Elliott Abrams became assistant secretary in the spring of 1985, it continues to have adherents at senior levels in the Department.

This issue surfaced again early in 1986 in connection with the efforts of Philip Habib, special ambassador for Central America, to get a Contadora agreement between the



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March and June votes in the House on military aid to the *contras*.

Habib seemed to some House Republicans to be pursuing an agreement with inadequate safeguards for the president's primary goal of a democratic Nicaragua. When Habib met with the House Republican leadership to discuss the issue, he defended his position by insisting that "the *contras* can't win." About the same time he wrote a letter to several congressmen saying that the U.S. would terminate military aid to the *contras* as soon as the Sandinistas *signed* an acceptable agreement. Congressman Jack Kemp brought the matter to the president, asking whether our diplomacy was based on the view that "the *contras* can't win." The president said, in effect, "of course not," and restated what has been his consistent policy. Subsequently, according to the *New York Times*, Assistant Secretary Abrams at a not-for-attribution briefing for reporters said that Habib's letter should have said that we would cease support for the *contras* on *implementation* of an acceptable agreement (rather than "on signing"). (Habib said that the letter in question was drafted in ARA and approved at high levels.)

A reasonable interpretation of this episode is that State decided to send Habib to Central America in a new attempt to implement its primary goal, expecting that if an agreement were reached the president would decide that it made sense to accept it. But then, at least partly because Kemp and others succeeded in bringing the issue to the president, the Department had to retreat.

The long absence of any serious State Department program to get international political support for the democratic resistance in Nicaragua, and its continued emphasis on achieving agreement rather than fulfillment of commitments to democracy, raise questions about the quality of the president's own performance. Again and again he has made better choices than the professional "experts" at State, while failing to take minimal measures to ensure that his decisions are being implemented. And he has let those who have sought to do so be removed. His NSC special assistant for Latin America from 1983 to 1985, Constantine Menges, was removed first from Latin American responsibility, and then from the NSC staff altogether, because of his successful efforts to obtain presidential review of a series of attempts by State to implement its version of the administration's policy—although the result of each such review was a decision by the president to overrule State. (The Menges case was not unique. A parallel experience befell Roger Robinson, the president's former NSC senior director for international economic affairs.)

THE ASSERTION by a prominent administration spokesman that the *contras* cannot win assumes particular importance because, in the kind of conflict now being waged in Nicaragua, "looking like a winner" is critical to one's chance of succeeding. That conflict is not purely or even primarily a military one, and presenting it as such distorts reality in a way that can only serve the Sandinista cause (their army of over 50,000 well-equipped men is far stronger in military terms than the *contra* force or any other regional army). The conflict combines political, ideological, economic, and military elements, and the psychological factor is vital. As numerous conflicts have shown in the last forty years—and as the paradoxical results of the militarily unsuccessful Tet offensive of 1968 demonstrated so vividly in Vietnam—the perceptions of who seems likely to prevail ultimately are more important than static balances of military forces in deciding the outcome of such confrontations.

Thus expressions of what can be called "world opinion" can have a real impact on the struggle for Nicaragua. "Realists" usually denigrate the importance of what is called "world opinion"—which is indeed often overrated, underdefined, and credited with a moral authority and political effectiveness it does not possess. But the widespread refusal of the democratic governments of Europe and Latin America to give political and moral support to the Nicaraguan resistance movement, and their willingness to give such



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support, as well as material aid,[1] to the Sandinistas explain why the prospects of *contra* success are not significantly greater than they are.

In Nicaragua itself, where the attitude of a number of sectors of the populace is a key factor in the struggle, many people must feel doubtful that the Sandinista regime can be defeated when they see it being supported not only by the Russians and Cubans, but also by European democracies, Argentina, Mexico, and Canada. The steady stream of Western church people, literary and artistic figures, "human rights activists," and politicians, who go to Nicaragua and accept the Sandinista version of things, must also have an effect on the assessments made by the population. It is hard to believe that the confidence of Nicaraguan opposition leaders themselves is not shaken by the contrast between the treatment they get when they go to Europe seeking help, and the lionization there of Daniel Ortega and his representatives.

Nor are media and elite opinions in the United States—and through them congressional votes—unaffected by perceptions that America is virtually alone in its support of the *contras*, and by the fact that most vocal and "sophisticated" European opinion believes that the Sandinistas are both in the right and likely to prevail. Indeed, in the face of virulent and sustained European misrepresentations of U.S. policy as "intervention on behalf of *Somocismo*," and domestic concern that, if the *contras* cannot win, we may be getting into "another Vietnam" (that is, a losing struggle), there must be some doubt about the staying power of the Reagan administration itself on the issue.

Furthermore, our continued support of the *contras* is a substantial political cost to us in Europe and some of South America, where our diplomatic and political programs on any subject must be carried on in the face of constant attacks for our intervention in Nicaragua. At the same time our radical enemies and terrorist supporters use their opposition to the *contras* to gain legitimacy. The fact that our policy of support for the resistance is costly to us in this way is a further reason to doubt that we will continue to stick to it. And the fact that it would be similarly costly to the first countries that join us is part of the reason to doubt that we will gain allies easily.

The fact that U.S. policy toward Nicaragua is not paralleled by European and Latin American democracies—and indeed is actively opposed by some of them—is therefore a matter of practical concern, and it is for this reason, not a frivolous desire for popularity, that we should try to change the situation. One of the normal duties of a diplomatic service is to work to secure such support for its country. In this instance the American service has not achieved much success. So we must ask: Was this failure inevitable? Would these countries have rejected any possible effort by American diplomats? Or might greater competence—exemplified by directed energy, resourcefulness, and commitment—have produced a different outcome? If, for example, ARA had made more visible the extent to which the majority of Latin American nations oppose the Sandinistas, might the balance of European opinion have been different?

It is impossible to give certain answers to these questions. By their nature intellectual fashions appear irresistible until they are successfully resisted, and certainly there is much to support the view that trying to turn the prevailing European perceptions of Nicaragua would be a formidable, perhaps a hopeless, task. There has been a massive and splendidly organized effort on behalf of the Sandinistas, and the European press has been even more one-sided than the American. Governments, more concerned about domestic constituencies

[1]During the period 1981–85, Western European countries provided three to five times as much aid to Nicaragua as to all its democratic neighbors combined. Although the flow has slowed lately, the Sandinista regime still gets more than all the freely elected governments of the region taken together, about six times as much per capita.



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than about Central America or Washington, are either critical of American policy and the *contras* or, at best, silent on the issues.

A closer look, however, suggests that things are not as bad as they appear at first, and that private opinion among informed people is not nearly as one-sided as the public discussion suggests. In Latin America, as astute an observer as Carlos Rangel, the widely respected Venezuelan writer and former diplomat, reported over a year ago that the debate over the Sandinistas had quietly ended with general recognition of how bad and dangerous they are. Public discussion there is now mostly an exercise in what must be said to get along, given the realities of power, politics, and the press. In Europe, too, a number of leaders—Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain, for instance—have come to understand that the views widely accepted in Europe are wrong. But they have not found it worthwhile to challenge the conventional wisdom forcefully, because it is clear that any government or political leader in Europe who tries to make the case for the *contras* now would come under heavy attack.

In Europe and South America the practical political situation is that no major government believes that it has enough incentive to justify the costs of being the first to try to change the tide. The benefits would be diffuse, uncertain, and distant, the costs would be immediate, individual, and certain. But in a number of cases it is a narrowly selfish calculation, not conviction on the merits of the issues, nor a judgment about long-term national interests, that dictates this conclusion.

Whether or not either a determined and creative special diplomatic effort by the United States, or merely a normal competent program to explain our version of things to the governments and peoples of friendly countries, could have turned things around—whether indeed either could still do so—must remain open questions. The essential point is that neither a special program, nor even a normal competent effort to inform those who are ready to hear our views, has been made. This is apparent both in inattention to details, which are individually minor but cumulatively important, and in some broader aspects of policy.

TAKING the former category first, there is the example of State's handling of the notorious "72 Hour Document." This was prepared by the Sandinista leaders in September 1979 as a report to their high-level cadres on their program for Nicaragua. It clearly documents the FSLN's commitment to internal totalitarian controls and to external aggression from the time it assumed power, and as such constitutes powerful evidence in support of the American case on Nicaragua. The Department had a copy of this document as early as late 1979, but it did not get a translation written until 1985 and did not release it publicly until March 1986.

Or consider another example in which I happened to be directly involved. In 1982, the Department decided, with unusual forehandedness, to prepare for the Socialist International's November session in Basel by commissioning a paper on the situation in Nicaragua to send to the delegates before the meeting, and asked me to write the paper. The manuscript—*Nicaragua: The Stolen Revolution*—was delivered on schedule in mid-August. But despite pressure from elsewhere in the administration, the pamphlet was not printed until a few weeks after the Basel meeting—at which plenty of pro-Sandinista material was distributed and we had nothing effective to counter it. When State finally produced the manuscript, substantially unchanged, as an attractive pamphlet in Spanish and English, it apparently had some difficulty making our embassies aware of it. In London, when a prominent parliamentarian who specializes in foreign policy asked for it by name at the U.S. embassy, he was met with blank stares and went away empty-handed. And when a prominent union leader offered to distribute several thousand copies to individuals connected to the French union movement, if he could get a French translation, State did not pursue this opportunity.



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Failure to make good use of a few documents seems like a small thing. But in the realm of political warfare, such material can play a critical role if it changes a one-sided debate into one with two views being presented. Unfortunately, the failures cited above are representative of State's performance on the basic diplomatic tasks of preparing solid presentations of our own case, distributing them effectively, doing advance work for international conferences, and making sure that our own representatives know our case and have the materials that are available to give to people who are willing to read our side of the story.

A more serious example of the same kind of thing was the Department's failure to provide a clear and forceful presentation of the legal basis for American action in relation to Nicaragua. Our legal case is strong and simple—it has been ably stated by Professor John Norton Moore in the *American Journal of International Law* (January 1986)—but, unfortunately, few have been exposed to it. The legal issue turns on whether or not Nicaragua committed aggression against its neighbors before the United States took action against it. If it did—and it can be amply demonstrated that it did—then international law clearly authorizes our actions. Whatever one's view of international law, the fact that it has the power to help legitimize or delegitimize action in the eyes of many, and that the issue of American policy toward Nicaragua was before the International Court of Justice during 1985 and 1986, made it important to ensure that this fundamental point be widely understood. But the Department did virtually nothing to explain our position, and very few either here or abroad know what it is.

The State Department's dealings with Mexico are perhaps the best example of how incompetence at the policy level helps to explain our lack of political success. Despite Mexico's claims to be "revolutionary" and its use of radical rhetoric, its government is neither revolutionary nor radical. But there is extensive communist penetration of its foreign ministry and some other key institutions, including the press. This is well described in Sol Sanders' recent book, *Mexico: Chaos on Our Doorstep*. For example, until at least 1980 the current foreign minister of Mexico served as the treasurer of the Lombardo-Toledano Institute for Economic, Political & Social Studies, which is an instrument of the People's Socialist Party, the Moscow-line communist organization in Mexico. The Mexican ambassador in Managua is widely known as "the 10th Commandante," in recognition of his close identification with the Sandinistas. At least since Castro's visit to Mexico in May 1979, Mexican presidents have adopted a policy of trying to protect themselves from communist internal destabilization by working with Castro and the Sandinistas in Central America. Almost from the inception of the Contadora process, Mexico has been the dominant influence in this group, and has succeeded in converting it essentially into diplomatic protection for the FSLN. The Mexican commitment to the Sandinistas is widely recognized in Central America, and it is assumed there that Washington is well aware of it as well.

However, despite all this, at no point has the State Department made it a major objective to induce Mexico to stop its diplomatic efforts on behalf of the Sandinistas. Nor has it indicated that we are so disturbed by those efforts that our relations with Mexico could be adversely affected. There has been no serious effort to counter the impression, widespread in Europe, that Mexico is neutral and objective on Central American issues. On the contrary, the U.S. government has been extremely warm and cordial towards Mexico, financially very helpful, and has favored it as the principal intermediary in dealing with the Sandinistas. Thus in 1982, at a time when Venezuela and Colombia were beginning to work with us on Central America, Secretary Haig accepted a Mexican invitation to participate in private bilateral consultations—without any warning to, or prior discussion with, Venezuela and Colombia—leaving the two countries that had been interested in being helpful to us out in the cold and



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embarrassed. Thus, too, many of the "secret" bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Sandinistas have been held in Mexico, with the Mexicans treated as "neutral" mediators. For the Central Americans, all this was powerful evidence that it was our commitment to democracy in Nicaragua that was the pious hope, and that sooner or later we would accept an agreement that would leave the Sandinistas in power.

MOST FUNDAMENTALLY, the Department has at no point seriously considered what it would take to get some of the democracies to give political support to the democratic side in the Nicaraguan civil war, or decided whether to adopt a program to achieve that goal. Nor has the Department made an evaluation of how much the *contras*' lack of political support reduces their chance of success. It has let the crucial debate about whether the *contras* can win be conducted as if that were simply a military question, when an equally decisive issue is political. The *contras* can win if they are supported by the democracies—as the opposition to Somoza was; they have little chance if they do not have outspoken political support from any democracy except the United States.

Could and should the Department still do anything to change the political alignment on Nicaragua? Certainly. But this will be a difficult task without leadership from the top, because the State Department does not have strong arrangements for developing and implementing political programs that require an integration of strategy between two regional bureaus—such as the European (EUR) and Latin American ones. Traditionally EUR has had a kind of primacy in the Department, and it seems likely that other bureaus do not find it easy to convince EUR to give high priority in Europe to the problems of other regions. Furthermore, while ARA's current leadership seems to see things more realistically than the two previous regimes, it apparently decided that it was prudent to postpone the major U.S. effort to gain democratic support for the Nicaraguan resistance until after the resistance movement had demonstrated its right to such support by internal reforms and by military victories—which of course had to wait until after congressional action had provided military aid.

Such a judgment can never be conclusively refuted, but there is some reason to be skeptical that it makes sense to wait for modest improvements in the *contras*' case when it is clear that the real reason they are not being supported has very little to do with the facts of the dispute. (After all, and whatever their imperfections, in terms of democratic leadership and human rights values the *contras* were already leagues ahead of other groups that the democracies found no trouble supporting—such as the *mujahedin*, the African National Congress, and the Sandinistas themselves.) Waiting to campaign for support for the Nicaraguan resistance until after it has achieved military victories leaves time for attitudes and understandings to harden against them, and for all kinds of adverse developments. In political war it practically never pays to delay long before trying to mobilize support.

We need, then, to move urgently to get democratic support for the *contras*, even though some will argue that the trend is in our direction. There is, in fact, a lot we can do in a short time. While the governments of Nicaragua's three neighbors—Costa Rica, Honduras, and El Salvador—are now regularly saying that a Sandinista regime is not compatible with peace in the region, they have not been mobilized to nearly their full diplomatic potential. And, since in each of those countries there are many political cross-currents that the Sandinistas or the Mexicans might exploit successfully to break the current unity, we risk that unity if we do not move ahead and build momentum in support of the Nicaraguan resistance movement.

Within weeks we could get a strong declaration against the Sandinistas (implying desire for strong OAS action) signed by at least 16 OAS member countries (e.g., Nicaragua's three neighbors, ourselves, nine Caribbean countries, Ecuador, Paraguay, and



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Chile). Armed with this, we probably could—if we made a creative and substantial effort—get Colombia, or Venezuela, or both to play a leading role in sponsoring the effort of the Central American democracies to get the OAS to continue its efforts to bring democratic government to Nicaragua. (The OAS meeting that asked Somoza to leave is still technically open.) On this basis Colombia and Venezuela could bring about a consensus among the major Latin American democracies for the OAS to continue what it started in 1979.

Once South America speaks clearly against the Sandinistas, we will be ready for the final phase: reversing the debate in Europe, and getting the other democracies to join in the political defense of democracy in Central America. With an OAS call for the Sandinistas to do what was demanded of Somoza, we would have good prospects both of turning the European democracies around and solidifying domestic support behind the policy of supporting the *contras*. The result could be a political line-up on Nicaragua like that on Afghanistan. With such support the *contras* would start looking like winners, and could expect eventually to win.

THE BASIC FACTS in Nicaragua are very similar to those in Afghanistan. In both countries foreign communist military assistance is keeping an oppressive communist regime in power. There are differences between the two cases. In Afghanistan the foreign communist military assistance comes primarily in the form of large numbers of Soviet troops. In Nicaragua it consists of security and military advisers and equipment from Cuba, Eastern Europe, and terrorist organizations. But the ratio of foreign security personnel to local citizens in Afghanistan is only about twice as high as it is in Nicaragua—a difference explained by the fact that the Afghans are such good fighters that a large outside force is required to defeat them. In Afghanistan the dead and exiled are so far perhaps one-fourth to one-third of the population, and in Nicaragua so far "only" 10 to 15 percent.

On the other hand, while the size and blatancy of the communist intervention in Afghanistan is greater than that in Nicaragua, the democratic chance of victory must rate higher in Nicaragua. Also the case for supporting democracy must be greater so far from the Soviet heartland. And one might think that the *contras* appeal to the Western democracies would be enhanced by the fact that they are Western, Christian, and much more democratic and humanistic that the *mujahedin*.

If this comparison of Afghanistan and Nicaragua seems odd, even outrageous, it is because we are so steeped in the general political perceptions, and those perceptions are seriously warped. The fact that they are so warped suggests that they can be changed, and that if they were changed it would be a significant event.

The *results* of our diplomacy, I have argued, have been so inadequate as to raise grave doubts about the State Department's competence. The examples of these failings are threefold. First, comparable to what General Ridgeway found in the Eighth Army, there has been a failure to take care of the basics: getting our story written, documented, and promptly distributed to those it might influence; working regularly and carefully with countries that support our position to make full use of their support; and making sure that our representatives know our case and present it well. Second, there has been a failure to coordinate our relationship with Mexico and our Central American policy. Finally, a strategic view both of how important democratic support is to the *contras*' chances, and of what is required to get the necessary support, has been absent.

The State Department's job is to get international support for the interests of the United States—including our democratic values and our national security interest. When an organization fails to achieve the success that could be attained—as the State Department has on Central America, one of its most important issues—it has the burden of showing how such failure is compatible with competent performance.



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# The Status & Power of Japan

George R. Packard

THE POSITION of Japan in the world is anomalous, if not historically unprecedented. Its twin objectives of self-sufficiency and technological superiority—a national strategy of sorts—cannot be achieved without the security provided by close association with the United States, and without access to U.S. markets and technology. History provides few examples of a nation that has become wealthy in large part through trade while doing little to defend its access to foreign markets and raw materials. One must search hard, moreover, to find a precedent for a nation that can afford the most modern weapons, and is capable of producing them, yet makes a political decision to forswear them, remaining a junior partner in an unequal alliance.

As we ponder the curious global status of Japan, a series of questions arises. Can the Japanese go on for long as the major creditor nation of the world without seeking to protect investments, sea lanes, and access to markets with their own military might? Will they remain content with their security policy if the United States comes to be seen less as a friendly ally and more as a tough competitor seeking, perhaps with others, to block Japan from maintaining and enhancing its status as a great trading power? Can the Japanese continue to affect passivity towards or disinterest in such nearby problems as the political arrangements on the Korean peninsula, the treatment of Taiwan and Hong Kong by mainland China, the political complexion of the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand, and the expansionist designs of the Vietnamese? Will the Japanese be forever content to permit the Soviets to occupy the Northern Territories, which they deeply believe to be an integral part of Japan? Most of all, will not the existence of these problems elicit a nationalistic desire to have a voice in their disposition, thus pushing Japan to enhance its ability to project force beyond its narrowly conceived self-defense area?

Japanese political debate, for now, is dominated by domestic concerns, and such fundamental questions as what kind of nation Japan should be, and should become. While recognizing that until such issues are worked through it is unlikely any prime minister or any cabinet will steer a vastly different strategic course, it is still useful to consider the options available (or not available) to the Japanese should they become unhappy with current security arrangements. Of course any cataclysmic event—global depression, regional war, a massive outburst of hostile protectionism—will vitiate the analysis that follows. In such cases, pragmatic Japanese leaders will adopt pragmatic policies necessary for survival.

There are a number of considerations that could lead the Japanese to reassess their security arrangements. They may decide that the United States is not a trustworthy ally, or

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that, if it has started on an irreversible economic decline comparable to that of Britain, it cannot be an effective protector for very long. They may come to believe that self-respect requires that they should not rely forever on another great power for the defense of their vital interests. They may fear the outbreak of rampant protectionism, with the U.S. becoming an increasingly unaccommodating competitor. Any of these developments would point to the need for a radical reassessment, the need for greater independence or participation in a different alliance.

The second of these options is unlikely to be attractive. If the U.S. is less than a perfect ally, the Japanese despise the Russians and could not imagine entering into security arrangements with them. The Japanese know, too, that they are not taken seriously in Europe and could find no useful allies there in any event. China is another matter, but its current backwardness and political unpredictability, and its possible power as a regional competitor in the future rule it out as a strategic ally. The only real alternative to the U.S. alliance is thus an independent posture.

Going it alone, while attractive in theory to the Japanese, raises thorny practical questions. Unarmed neutrality, which held much appeal for intellectuals and left-wing politicians in the late 1940s and 1950s, is no longer viable. The Japanese have seen and learned lessons from the fate of Tibet, Afghanistan, and Cambodia, and are concerned by the massive buildup of Soviet strength in Asia and in the western Pacific. They will never accept Soviet rules of international behavior. Conventionally armed, Japan would find the costs of defending its far-flung interests staggering compared with the costs under the current security treaty with the United States. Political opposition from Japanese taxpayers, who well remember how the ultranationalists maneuvered for ever larger budgets in the 1930s, would be enormous—perhaps enough to force the Liberal Democratic party from power. Another huge cost would be the increased hostility from neighboring Korea, the People's Republic of China, and Southeast Asian countries, who well recall Japanese aggression in the 1930s and 1940s. Finally, the risks associated with nuclear armed neutrality seem prohibitive. Leaving aside the enormous political risks of a decision to go nuclear, a central question remains: against whom would such weapons be used and for what purposes? It has been estimated that one or, at most, two hydrogen bombs of medium size, dropped on Honshu Island between Tokyo and Osaka, could annihilate some 50 percent of Japan's population, and well over half its industrial capacity. What leader would invite a counterattack under these circumstances by threatening or actually using Japan's own nuclear weapons?

For all the reasons above, Japan would seem to have little choice but to maintain its existing security treaty and economic relationship with the United States, the only question being how they might try to modify these arrangements so as to make them more equal, more palatable, and more advantageous for themselves.

ANY DISCUSSION of how the current U.S.-Japan relationship might be modified must consider, first of all, the likely political and economic developments within each nation that will influence foreign and defense policies, and the international environment, particularly in Asia and the Pacific.

In Japan, the high economic growth rates of the past two decades will likely be succeeded by much lower growth (2 to 4 percent a year). Large trade surpluses have attracted unfavorable attention to Japan's export-oriented economy, and it seems likely that foreign pressure will force Japan to invest more at home, stimulate domestic demand, and relax its previously intense struggle for ever larger shares in world markets. This may serve to mitigate trade frictions to some degree, especially if the yen is properly valued against the dollar. Even so, there is a strong likelihood that persistent trade surpluses with the U.S. will present policymakers in both



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countries with a never-ending set of irritating trade frictions and will lead to continuing calls for protection in Congress.

Pressed by its newly-industrialized neighbors—the Republic of Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore—Japan will be forced to give up much of its labor-intensive or low value-added manufacturing and move resources into high-technology industries. This trend will thrust Japan into direct competition with the U.S. (as in the case of semi-conductors) with the result that we can expect either intensive trade wars or a series of market-sharing agreements under which world markets are controlled by cartel-like arrangements of Japanese and U.S. manufacturers. Japanese industry will require substantial access to and shares of the U.S. and European markets to justify the large investments of R&D needed for high-tech manufacturing, and this need will tend to modify Japanese behavior. In sum, Japan will recognize that its need for the U.S. market, where one-third of its exports are shipped, clearly outweighs its longing for a more independent and psychologically satisfying role in foreign affairs.

On the other hand, the high personal savings rate in Japan is not likely to disappear, meaning that Japanese corporations will have lower capital costs than their American counterparts. When combined with their skilled labor force, extraordinarily efficient management, cooperative government-business relations, and high technological prowess, this will place Japan in the forefront of industrial nations and make it hard for them to avoid piling up trade surpluses, even when they make a serious effort to do so. The availability of enormous supplies of low-cost capital will also mean that Japanese entrepreneurs will be searching throughout the world for new investment opportunities. Much of their direct overseas investment will go to nations like the United States, where protectionism threatens exports, a trend already visible in the past several years. These direct investments, in addition to numerous joint enterprises with American companies in both nations and in third countries, will tend to have a bonding influence on bilateral relations. It may, however, also have a tendency to raise fears in Congress that the Japanese are "taking over" key segments of the American economy.

The United States, for its part, faced with unprecedented budget deficits and very likely with high global trade deficits, will face a day of reckoning before the end of the 1980s. No nation can continue to overspend at the current rate of the U.S., nor pile up such massive external debt, without an eventual loss of confidence in its currency and potentially devastating economic consequences. As the U.S. grapples with these unprecedented difficulties, Japan must necessarily come to be seen ever more clearly for what it is: a major contributor to the trade deficit problem and a major part of the solution to the budget problem, through its provision of capital to fund the deficit. Increasingly, domestic and foreign economic policy in Washington will have to take account of the role of the Japanese.

Besides trade and economic policies, the U.S.-Japan relationship will be influenced by the balance of power in the Pacific. It is clear that the Soviet Union intends to play a major role in Asia and the Pacific. The reasons for this decision are not so clear. Do the Soviets feel threatened by a resurgent China and the prospect, in the more distant future, of a highly sophisticated, powerful Japan? Do they feel that, given their status as a superpower, they deserve a voice in all parts of the globe and must have the military might to back up this assertion of power in the Pacific where, since World War II, the U.S. Seventh Fleet has reigned unchallenged? Or is their interest in the region an expression of a drive towards global hegemony, an opportunistic seizing of advantages where they are available?

Whatever the exact mix of motives, the Soviet Pacific fleet has grown from about 200 ships in 1960 to about 400 ships and 130 submarines today. Far from being a defense-of-the-homeland force, this is a sea-power



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projection force, equipped with nuclear-armed cruise missiles, among other weapons. This makes it the largest of the four Soviet fleets, with about 30 percent of the total Soviet navy, including two of its three aircraft carriers.

Soviet forces in East Asia include about 1,690 tactical aircraft and 53 army divisions, totaling some 500,000 troops. They also have about one-third of the nation's 441 mobile SS-20 intermediate-range ballistic missiles. About 90 percent of these Soviet ground forces are deployed along the Sino-Soviet border.

The Soviets have systematically expanded and modernized the North Korean armed forces and, even more disturbing to the Japanese, have placed some 10,000 troops plus MIG-23 aircraft on the southern Kuril island of Etorofu, which the Japanese claim as their own.

The age-old Soviet dream of a warm-water port in the East has become a reality at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam, a facility that allows them for the first time to project military power into regions where U.S. forces have long been dominant. Most important for the Japanese, this gives the Soviets an ability to interdict essential sea lines of communication, including those lines which carry more than 70 percent of Japan's vital oil supplies from the Middle East.

Japanese leaders have observed this buildup with growing concern.[1] Soviet power and their own relative weakness are brought home to them with numbing regularity in the form of military overflights, passages of naval vessels through the three straits, and massive training exercises in the Sea of Okhotsk and the Sea of Japan. Still, there is no firm consensus on the extent and nature of the threat, nor on the matter of how to respond. While most Japanese analysts appear to doubt that the Soviets have in mind a direct invasion of the home islands, they fear increased political pressures in negotiations over such issues as fishery rights. Their major reaction to date has been to step up the implementation of their 1978 defense buildup plan; a heightened awareness of the Soviet threat has made this buildup more politically palatable than could have been imagined a decade ago. This buildup should not be underestimated. Japan is eighth in the world and third among non-nuclear powers in terms of its defense expenditures. If the current defense buildup is carried out, U.S. military planners are convinced that it will be able to give considerable pause to any Soviet planner who might be thinking of a direct assault.

The other major actor in the region, China, remains a conundrum for Japan. The Japanese clearly wish to take advantage of the enormous Chinese market, supplies of raw materials, and investment opportunities. On the other hand, they have shown no disposition to monopolize the Chinese market (nor could they, even if they wished to do so, since the Chinese memory of the 1930s persists) and, in fact, prefer to be accompanied by the U.S. and other Western powers in the risky game of investing in the incalculable Chinese economy. There is an underlying suspicion as well that a powerful, united, modernized, and nationalistic China in the twenty-first century could become a difficult neighbor.[2]

The Korean peninsula, too, remains a frustration for the Japanese. They cannot be indifferent to the nature of the two regimes, and cannot forever restrict their policies to peaceful relations with the North and South, while recognizing and trading with the South. They have a vital interest in seeing that political stability comes to the South, thus avoiding the weakness and confusion that could tempt the North to renewed invasion. But they see the U.S. as paramount both in influence and in commitment to the security of the South; they feel they can do little to influence the outcome of events in this vital region; and they continue to view Koreans in general with contempt. The fiery

[1] See Alvin H. Bernstein, "The Soviets in Cam Ranh Bay" (*The National Interest*, Spring 1986).

[2] See Michel Oksenberg and Kenneth Lieberthal, "Forecasting China's Future" (*The National Interest*, Fall 1986).



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Korean reaction in September 1986 to the statement by Japan's education minister that the Koreans cooperated in Japan's annexation of 1910 was a renewed reminder to Japanese leaders of their unpopularity on the peninsula. It will be difficult for Prime Minister Nakasone to find a precise role for Japan that will satisfy Japanese national aspirations without angering once again the Koreans.

GIVEN a nationalist Japan that seeks a larger role in the world consistent with its economic successes, but also a Japan that shies away from any large increase in its military power, what policies should the U.S. adopt to maximize the advantages of the partnership and make the security treaty work in its own national interest as well as that of Japan?

The first basis for a wise U.S. policy is to look at the Japanese as they look at themselves. Despite their growing affluence and technological prowess, they are even more conscious of their very real vulnerabilities: lack of raw materials; dependence on supplies and sea lanes that could be cut off overnight through revolutions, warfare, or other regional instabilities over which they have no control; susceptibility to earthquakes, *tsunami*, typhoons; and the growing and proximate military might of a semi-hostile superpower.

Besides these external vulnerabilities, they face serious domestic troubles. Where we tend to see strength in their domestic political, economic, and social institutions, they see weakness. Their national debt occupied a greater percentage (52 percent) of GNP than ours (49 percent) in 1985. Their housing is poor by our standards, their national railways lose millions of dollars each year, their system of education cries for reform, their society fosters crippling competition, their elderly are often left unprotected, and an aging labor force places crushing burdens on present and future generations of workers. Never mind that the Japanese nation is far less burdened with crime and drugs than our own. *Their* perception is that they are in no position, yet, to play a major role on the world stage.

When pressed to state why Japan has been so reluctant to assume a more powerful role in the world, Japanese leaders of all political stripes offer two major explanations. First, postwar domestic adjustments are still incomplete. A psychological shift toward renewed self-confidence and pride in Japan must replace the postwar feelings of inferiority and defeatism if Japan is to step forward. Second, Japan must articulate some new message for the world: talk of markets and profits will produce only envy and hostility. A cottage industry of writers and thinkers has grown up to address this question, but it is still difficult to perceive in their writings a new and positive theme that can appeal both to domestic and foreign audiences at the same time.

In this respect, Prime Minister Nakasone has been something of an aberration. In a nation that prefers group action and has become accustomed to accepting vague political slogans in place of policies, he has stood out by his confident articulation of pro-American positions and changed the political landscape. All future political leaders will be measured against his direct and forthright speaking style, his bold initiatives, his open and avowed espousal of closer relations with the U.S., and his efforts to open Japanese markets as a way of reducing trade tensions. They will also have to reckon with his unabashed espousal of traditional Japanese values. Yet the tendency toward cautious consensus-seeking will remain strong within the powerful bureaucracies.

Still, despite Nakasone's summit successes and warm rapport with President Reagan, there remains a deeply ingrained propensity to view foreign affairs as a cold and hostile arena in which most other nations do not wish Japan well. Partly this is a self-fulfilling prophecy, since the Japanese have not, for the most part, learned how to win friends and influence people around the world. The three major rivals to succeed Nakasone are more likely to revert to previ-



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ous models of cautious consensus-seeking, group-oriented wielding of power. They will mouth internationally acceptable positions but will need to bow to nationalistic pressures at home.

The second basis for a wise Japan policy is to recognize and find outlets for Japan's burgeoning nationalism. The Japanese are justifiably proud of their economic miracle, attribute much of it to the fact that they work harder than most other peoples, and are quick to resent the drumbeat accusations from Americans and Europeans that they have somehow gained their success through devious or unfair trade practices. Far from viewing their homogeneity as a weakness, they look for ways to exalt Japan's unique internal harmony.

Prime Minister Nakasone's widely publicized remarks about racial minorities lowering educational levels in the U.S. reflected not only his own convictions but those of the vast majority of Japanese. Racism was a major component in Japan's nationalism of the 1930s and remains so today. Their blindness to the strength that the U.S. and other nations gain from diversity and pluralism will continue to plague Japan's diplomats and policymakers of the future.

In addition, the Japanese have a keen sense of hierarchy rooted in Confucian principles, and they made up their collective mind that they should be and will be accepted among the first class of world powers. Somewhere stored away in the national subconscious is the memory of the 1920s when the U.S. Congress excluded them from immigrating, and of the 1930s when the West began to exclude their products. By the same standard, there was and still is a feeling that Western nations ganged up on Japan in the imperial sweepstakes, censuring the latecomer Japanese for taking Manchuria after they had satisfied their own ambitions in India, Indochina, Burma, the Philippines, Hong Kong, and Indonesia. This adds up to extreme sensitivity in dealing with matters of trade and investment. For example, severely protectionist legislation in the U.S., combined with existing trade restrictions in Europe, could lead the Japanese to try (again) to form a yen block in Asia that would exclude the products of the West. This scenario is not even a remote possibility today, but it would surely arise if the West were to slide back into the isolationism and protectionism of the 1930s.

Third, the Japanese seek status as much as traditional forms of power, and are searching for new ways to achieve it without massive military power. They are undeterred by the fact that no other nation in history has achieved status in such a manner, for they believe that no other nation is like Japan. If the U.S. can find ways to appear respectful of Japan's accomplishments and actually to include Japan in its own policy calculations as a more equal partner, half the problem will have been solved.

A fourth basis for a wise Japan policy is to recognize that progress in science and technology has become a religion for the Japanese. They are determined to achieve world supremacy in R&D in a number of fields, whatever it takes. If one examines their posture toward a space program, the picture becomes clear. The U.S. has tried for years, with little success, to sell its space satellites to Japan, citing superior technology, lower cost, the easing of the trade imbalance, the strengthening of the alliance. Even so, the Japanese insist on developing their own space program, inventing their own satellites and rockets, and rejecting our products.

Their policy on uranium provides further evidence. In a land without oil, the Japanese have turned to nuclear reactors and now have thirty-two in operation, supplying about one-fourth of the country's electric power. To reduce further dependence on imported oil, the atomic energy program will supply 35 percent of national electricity needs by 1995, and over half by early in the twenty-first century. The uranium to power these reactors could be imported from the U.S., Canada, or elsewhere, but this fits poorly with the Japanese desire for self-sufficiency. Besides, the Carter administra-



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tion delivered a severe jolt to the Japanese in 1977 by threatening to withhold supplies of enriched uranium, a policy that was later reversed. In 1981, therefore, Japan broke ground for a $19 million pilot plant at the seaside town of Nio on the Inland Sea to extract uranium from seawater at enormous cost, even after British and French scientists had given up on the idea. Their goal is eventually to extract 1,000 tons of uranium each year at market price—an amount which, if it proves feasible, will more than meet domestic needs and may even allow for export to Third World nations.

Some Americans have mistaken this sort of desire for self-sufficiency, technological supremacy, revived nationalism, and status for a disguised repetition of the series of conquests undertaken in the name of the "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" of the 1930s. (See Theodore White's article in the *New York Times Magazine* of July 28, 1985). This view rests on serious misunderstandings of Japan's own view of its role in the world.

The Japanese have no desire to conquer and rule other peoples, or to "de-industrialize" America. The trauma of losing World War II is still vivid today. Japan has no messianic vision or "message" to deliver to the other peoples of Asia. Their anti-colonial fervor spawned a set of nationalisms throughout Asia which would reject Japanese expansionism out of hand were it ever to be reborn in some new guise. Japanese leaders prefer an economically strong United States, not a declining ally.

The fifth basis of a wise Japan policy is to recognize that if the Japanese need our technology, we increasingly need theirs. This has become all too apparent in the military and dual-use technology field. The shift began in 1983, when the Pentagon first raised the subject with Japan. Until then, it had been firm Japanese policy not to export or release military-related technology to any nation, not even to the United States. Prime Minister Nakasone changed this policy and allowed an exception for the U.S. By 1986, serious negotiations were under way over which technologies would move from Japan to the U.S.; the principle has been established and the precedent is significant.

The Japanese are pushing forward in a host of new fields: lasers, robotics, computers, semi-conductors, biogenetics, telecommunications and space, to mention only a few. They are reported in some areas to be well ahead of the U.S. In other areas they seek to acquire U.S.-developed technologies through licensing, joint ventures, and purchase. It is clear that both nations profit from sharing advances. It should also be clear, despite alarmist warnings from both Japanese and American critics, that neither side will achieve "domination of the Pacific." The U.S. will simply not stand idly by and permit the Japanese to do to our semi-conductor industry what they have done to the automotive industry in Detroit, and Japan will not be content to take on a permanent role as junior partner to the U.S.

In this respect, the Japanese attitude toward the strategic defense initiative (SDI) is illustrative. After an initial period of public and private agonizing over whether or not to participate, and in the face of the usual left-wing and media criticism that the U.S. was trying to absorb Japan into its strategic offense against the Soviet Union, the Japanese government has signaled that it intends to allow Japanese private industry and laboratories to participate. The appeal is clear. To stay away from SDI might be tantamount to giving up an insurmountable technological lead to the German, British, and American participants. Also, and as a separate future consideration, if SDI eventually proves feasible and affordable, it would have an almost irresistible appeal for the Japanese as a security system that would enable them to leap past the nuclear weapons era and into the control and defense of space, all under the magically acceptable name of "self-defense."

IF IT IS true that the Japanese, feeling vulnerable, nationalistic, superior, unloved, anxious for status, but unwilling to achieve it through military power, and eager for economic growth through scientific and



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technological supremacy, are unable to find a viable alternative to an economic and defense partnership with the United States, it is just as true that it is in the U.S. interest to retain Japan as a close partner and ally. Any policy that loosened the ties with Japan, heightened hostile competition, or led to a Japan-Soviet or Japan-China coalition aimed against U.S. interests would be a disaster of calamitous scale. It is imperative for both nations to soften the trade frictions that have plagued the relationship in the 1980s—a task requiring consummate political and diplomatic skills on each side.

The Japanese government must reverse its entire postwar program of maximizing exports and minimizing imports. It must overcome deeply ingrained bureaucratic resistance. It must recognize the limits to its previously successful efforts to dominate markets, driving out U.S. and other competitors, and it must be willing to share its technology and capital. The U.S. will need to boost its competitiveness in certain exports, shift resources into new sectors, and hold the line on the calls for protectionism, which are virtually certain to increase in 1987 and beyond. These shifts will be painful but not impossible for both sides.

Though Japan will continue to run a bilateral trade surplus for the indefinite future, a number of steps can and must be taken to keep it under reasonable control. Already monetary authorities in both Japan and the U.S. have recognized that the misalignment of the dollar-yen rate caused much damage from 1981 to 1985, and have taken measures to correct it. The Baker-Miyazawa agreement of the fall of 1986 foreshadows a new force in world monetary matters: The Group of Two, which will cooperate on exchange and interest rates even without the other five of the "Big Seven." Increasingly, through direct investment, Japanese enterprises will operate in the U.S., creating jobs and sharing technology and their own particular brand of management know-how. Most of all, Japan will be forced to take decisive (and painful) steps to open its own market to the products of the United States and other nations, if only to avoid massive retaliatory steps by its trading partners.

One can see the beginning of these movements already, and it is not necessary to look beyond the rational self-interest of each nation to find a basis for optimism that the trade issues can be resolved. Beyond self-interest, however, are some other intangible forces that will come into play, such as the shared values, belief in democratic principles and human rights, common need and desire for freedom of the seas, a liberal global trading system, and cultural exchanges, to make these arrangements more palatable.

The great danger in all this will be the perception by the USSR, China, the Koreas, and the ASEAN nations that Japan and the U.S. are entering into a kind of military-economic condominium in the Pacific basin, and this perception, which will have a strong basis in reality, may strain relations between America's allies in the region. It is probably correct to assert that whichever way the U.S.-Japan relationship goes, the Pacific basin idea will founder. If the partnership is too close, the others will feel, and will be, excluded and resentful. If it dissolves into all-out economic competition, the other Asian nations will be forced to take sides. The Pacific basin contrasts sharply with the North Atlantic in its possibilities for regional integration, but this is not necessarily adverse to U.S. interests.

Japan is going to become a far more assertive ally and economic partner than it has been in the past. Its abundance of capital and increasing willingness to use it for political purposes make this inevitable. Flexing its new financial muscles, Japan will push for an easing of tensions between the two superpowers, will try to establish peace in the Middle East, and as time passes will lean on Washington to avoid what it considers "diversions," such as the Reagan administration's preoccupation with Nicaragua. This trend may also be salutary, provided the U.S. government can find ways to consult and satisfy its wealthy and assertive partner with



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an independent role. One such avenue will be in the area of development assistance to critical security areas such as the Philippines, Egypt, Pakistan, Turkey, and Thailand. In exchange for offering Japan status as an equal leader of the free world, the U.S. can, and should, influence Japan to bear a much larger burden of economic aid. Such a close working relationship may temporarily offend Nato allies, most of whom can scarcely conceal their disdain for the Japanese, but this side effect can also have benefits. Those Europeans who wish to remain in the race for new technology and for influence in the Third World will be unable to ignore the Japanese as they have in the past and will move, as has the U.S., toward new joint enterprises.

A real challenge lies ahead in the resolution of tensions on the Korean peninsula. Events there are already outrunning any current planning by either the U.S. or Japan for the coming decade. With the energy, dynamism, and clear determination of the South Koreans to achieve a working democracy and acceptance into the club of industrialized nations as a backdrop, and with the ever present danger of civil discord, even violence, in the South and of new aggression from the North, and with the growing reluctance of American voters and the Congress to become embroiled in distant conflicts, it is virtually inevitable that Japan will be drawn into any process leading to a long-term solution on the peninsula, which is only 120 miles from its shores. Whether in fact Japan can produce the statesmanship and political sensitivity to achieve success in this imbroglio will be its first major test as a great power in the postwar era.

Finally, the U.S. must do everything in its power to support and speed along the halting steps being taken just now by a small handful of "international" Japanese to open up Japan's insular mentality and culture to a more realistic view of themselves and the world. This will require deep contacts in all professions and occupations, a two-way flow of faculty, students, and researchers, far more educational and cultural exchange, renewed efforts by the media on both sides to portray a more accurate and human picture of the other side, and an end to the stereotyping that distorts their view of us and ours of them.

The Japanese have caught up with the West, and in some areas have surpassed it. The great task of the next decade is to come to terms with that fact and to create an unprecedented strategic partnership based on a division of labor in which the Japanese assume major economic burdens to balance American military burdens, and to do it all in such a way as to reassure the rest of the world that our joint aims are beneficial and our goals are for the general good. No lesser goal can be worthy of the two richest democracies of the world.



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# When Countries Go Broke: Debt Through the Ages

Clifford M. Lewis

ON JULY 15, 1986, the British Foreign Office announced that the Soviet Union had agreed to a settlement on debts that had gone into default almost seventy years before. The *Financial Times* reported that the agreement covered a list of claims by British citizens whose losses included a parrot, a shaving stick, a sawmill, a horse, two cows, and some poultry. Of more general interest, however, was the settlement on roughly fifty million sterling in Imperial Russian bonds. Investors who are still able to find the bond certificates can expect to recover up to ten cents on the dollar. While few of the original investors are alive to collect, those who recently purchased the bonds stand to profit handsomely. Prior to settlement these bonds were trading at three cents on the dollar—their principle use being as wallpaper.

This story of Bolshevik defaults and settlement is very much in keeping with the history of international debt. Governments have been borrowing money, defaulting, and then reaching agreements on their defaulted obligations for centuries.

The medieval record on sovereign debt was far from encouraging to creditors. The English monarchy proved particularly adept at borrowing more than could be repaid. Creditors eventually caught on to the pattern of default and required tangible collateral. Edward III, for instance, had to pawn the crown jewels in order to obtain Florentine bank credit for his part in the Hundred Years War. The famous German banking house of the Fuggers—which still exists today—helped bankroll the early success of the Hapsburgs in expanding their dominion over Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, the Iberian peninsula and beyond; but their problems in collecting from the likes of Emperor Charles V convinced them to get out of the sovereign lending business—a decision that the latter-day Fuggers have upheld.

The most spectacular defaulter in the early history of international debt was Philip II of Spain. He turned to the Genoese banking community when the Fuggers declined to finance his various enterprises, which included the Armada, the reconquest of Belgium, and campaigns against the Ottomans. While Spain's New World minerals brought unprecedented wealth, Philip's finances were in perpetual disarray. (This was perhaps the first example of a government's natural resource windfall abetting an unsustainable fiscal outlay.) Various types of bonds were invented to fund his imperial projects and interest rates varied from 6 to 14 percent. These obligations were traded actively and large discounts emerged when Philip's credit

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rating was low. For example, in March of 1577 this paper traded for 55 percent of face value (comparable to the discount on Philippines debt before Marcos fell).

The market's perception of Spanish creditworthiness proved accurate. The first default was in 1557, followed by others in 1560, 1576, 1590, 1606, and 1627. Each default was preceded by plunging prices for outstanding Spanish debt. And each default was followed by a settlement which generally included consolidating bonds which had been secured by specific collateral with the general unfunded national debt. At one point Philip II decided his best option was to bankrupt his Genoese bankers (Genoa was, by the way, actually part of his empire). While the default of 1576 was largely successful in this limited aim, Philip remained dependent on bankers. For example, Portuguese financiers replaced the Genoese in bankrolling the great Armada in 1588. And while new money was generally forthcoming during Philip's forty-two year reign, its price kept rising and the burden of debt service eventually undermined Spain's domestic economy as well as her imperial ambitions.

Just as Spain's decline as a world power was associated with chronic financial mismanagement, so was Britain's rise dependent on a record of financial probity. As already noted, the English monarchy's repayment record had been a banker's nightmare; thus, the emergence of Britain as a creditworthy borrower required that its debts be separated from those of the crown. This process took place gradually in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and paralleled the Lockean political revolution. In 1692 the secondary market for government bonds was legalized, which sanctioned the array of trading tools such as call money and options that had long been used in Holland. The market for British bonds was originally dependent on overseas buyers who may, at various times in this period, have held the bulk of the total national debt. In any case, the key to success was investor confidence. This was built upon a record of assured performance and allowed the British Treasury to issue longer-term bonds at low rates such as the classic British "consuls," which were perpetual bonds paying a fixed 2 percent return. These consuls were sold at times when less creditworthy countries had difficulty selling short-term notes at yields much below 10 percent.

THE STRUCTURE for international lending remained largely unchanged from the seventeenth through early twentieth centuries. Foreign lending took two forms. First was short-term trade finance that functioned as an advance to raw material producers or to facilitate international payments. Such credits were the sinews of world commerce. Second were special purpose loans at fixed interest rates. The latter were used to build much of South America's and Russia's physical infrastructure.

Political authorities remained ambivalent about their bankers' overseas lending for most of the nineteenth century. Efforts to use foreign loans as political instruments remained popular but seldom worked. In 1887 Bismarck excluded Russian bonds from the German market, but the effect was the opposite of the one he intended, as this decision helped force Russia into the arms of the French, whose goverment officials aggressively supported their bankers in making politically convenient advances. However, it is not at all clear that even the French statesmen felt that they were well served by their financiers, who tended to make inexpedient demands of friendly powers and proved reluctant to make loans available whenever required. The British Foreign Office had even worse experiences in trying to convert the City's global banking supremacy to short-term political advantage. In the years before World War I, the foreign secretary, Lord Grey, eventually gave up trying to tap the great British merchant banking houses for politically-oriented development projects. In fact, his exasperation on this score became a matter of public record in the House of Commons.



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Defaults on international debts remained common throughout the nineteenth century. With certain notable exceptions, creditor country governments provided only limited support to lenders facing default. For one thing, private creditors found it impossible to obtain legal judgments against defaulting governments, even when suit was filed before a creditor country court. The landmark case in this regard was that of *De Haber* v *The Queen of Portugal*. In his 1851 decision Lord Campbell said, "to cite a foreign potentate in a municipal court . . . is contrary to the law of nations and an insult which he is entitled to resent." Similar sentiments pervaded other court tests of sovereign immunity in the nineteenth century. In 1877 the British courts held that Peruvian bonds, "are not contracts enforceable before the ordinary tribunals of any foreign government, or even of the ordinary tribunals of the government which issued them, without the consent of the [debtor] government." And the U.S. courts went even further when they held on a question of defaulted Latin American bonds that:

> the creditors from the beginning, took the chances of the investment. The very pledge of the national credit, while it demonstrates on the one hand the national character of the debt, on the other hand proclaims the notorious risk . . .

Investors facing defaults received about as much help from their governments as from their courts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Bismarck summarized the prevailing view in a letter sent to the Deutsche Bank in September 1888 outlining his attitude towards loans for the Anatolian railroad. He stated that he could not provide any sort of insurance against difficulties that the entrepreneurs had to handle themselves: "the latter cannot rely on the Reich to insure their financial position against the vicissitudes of precarious commercial ventures abroad." There were, of course, some famous exceptions to such *laissez faire* attitudes, but the conventional wisdom that British gunboats could be relied on to guarantee overseas investments is simply untrue. Seeming exceptions, such as the British occupation of Egypt in 1882 or the French occupation of Mexico in 1863, were justified on *political* grounds and not on the basis of collecting bad debts (which were, incidentally, not made good in either of these two famous examples of "gunboat diplomacy").

The most significant exception to the general rule of official restraint was the aggressive approach of the United States in the Caribbean. From the 1890s through the 1920s, U.S. presidents stood ready to support private investors with warships and marines. However, even in these cases the rationale for involvement was generally more political than economic. Protecting the Panama Canal became as important in U.S. strategic thinking as the Suez Canal was to the British. Moreover, from a purely commercial standpoint, U.S. involvement brought limited benefits to investors and was eventually abandoned.

But if creditor governments were not generally prepared to collect foreign debts, they protected the bankers who had underwritten them. Central banks took on the function of would-be capital market stabilizers in nineteenth century Europe. The idea was to prevent periodic banking panics from turning into economic depressions. As most foreign loans came in the form of bonds sold to individual investors, rather than bank loans, defaults did not affect public confidence in banks. Only when foreign bond defaults appeared likely to undermine the public's confidence in an important bank did central bankers become involved.

An example of this general rule is the Barings crisis of 1890, which was sparked by public concerns about Argentine loans. At this time Barings was the premier international merchant bank in the City of London. Its credit rating was almost on a par with that of the Bank of England itself, and it was the largest player in the trade finance market. Its downfall was caused by a decision to invest in Argentine bonds floated to fund some major infrastructure development



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projects. Rather than underwrite these through a syndicate that would have spread the risk, Barings went it alone. When it encountered difficulties in selling the bonds, many had to be kept in its own portfolio. The resulting illiquidity almost forced Barings to default on its own paper. This was prevented by a guarantee fund, organized by the Bank of England, to which most City banks contributed; Barings, and British capital markets, were helped over the crisis without serious dislocations. In fact, Barings was back on a sound footing within only ten years.

THE U.S. capital market began to compete with traditional capital exporters like Britain after World War I. The U.S., a net debtor country until 1914, had almost passed Britain in terms of foreign assets by 1929. Throughout the 1920s over a billion dollars' worth of foreign bonds were sold annually to a wide range of generally modest investors (the average individual holding was about $800). In fact, as a percentage of total capital market operations, foreign lending was much more important in the late 1920s than in the 1970s. In 1928, for example, more foreign bonds were sold in the U.S. than the total of all local, state, and national government securities.

This interwar period of rapid growth in foreign lending also saw the U.S. government trying to cope with its own international debt crisis. The problem was interallied war debts and boiled down to the question of who should pay for World War I. All of the allied governments owed the U.S. substantial sums—but they all thought German reparations should be used to pay off these debts. Not surprisingly, the Germans had a different view. As a result, the U.S. set up various teams of experts to negotiate a direct settlement with Germany. These missions recognized that Germany's ability to repay was tied to its economic well-being. This led to the 1924 Dawes Plan that provided a special loan to enable Germany to implement an overall package to halt hyperinflation. These policy measures included the introduction of a new asset-backed currency and an independent central bank that could control government deficits. Reparations were to be stretched out over a fifty-year period with payments tied to a "prosperity index." The 1929 Young Plan followed German default on the 1924 Dawes Plan obligations—which occurred as soon as Germany had to make significant net repayments to the U.S. It provided another special loan and further postponement of reparations. In the end, Germany unilaterally repudiated the Young Plan as well. By the 1930s it had become obvious that the net resource flow stemming from these government-sponsored plans had been favorable to Germany. The U.S. had, in effect, paid reparations to Germany rather than the other way around.

During the 1920s boom in foreign bonds, an abundant supply of investor capital helped drive interest rates lower; at the same time, a hefty risk premium on foreign loans was maintained. For example, between 1925 and 1928 the basic yields on AAA domestic U.S. bonds declined from 4.50 to 4.05 percent. During the same period, the risk premium on foreign bonds, compared to this AAA benchmark, stayed steady at about 50 percent (i.e., investors demanded yields half again larger on foreign bonds). But the absolute level of bond risk premiums, which were high by current standards, is somewhat misleading, given that the quality of foreign bonds deteriorated rapidly during the 1920s. This quality judgment is based on the percentage of bonds issued in any year that were in default in 1938. In the early 1920s, less than 20 percent of all bonds issued ended up in default. By the late 1920s, when the speculative boom in world capital markets hit its peak, the default index was about 60 percent.

Perhaps the most relevant aspect of the international capital flow story from 1920 to 1930 relates to Latin American sovereign borrowers. Given the mixed experience with loans made prior to 1920—many of which had been renegotiated more than once—there was some initial difficulty in marketing Latin American sovereign bonds in the U.S. But



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by the late 1920s, a significant number of such bonds were being placed on the market. In fact, Latin American borrowings in the U.S. from 1925 to 1929 were double those of Western Europe and totaled about $12 billion for the decade as a whole (in 1985 dollars). By 1930 roughly a third of this total was continuing to pay off with, for example, Argentine national issue continuing to be honored. Despite such exceptions, however, the great bulk of Latin issues, about 80 percent of those sold between 1925 and 1929, were defaulted upon.

These defaults were triggered by different factors, and a shortage of foreign exchange was by no means the only, or even most important, explanation. Mismanagement of the investments being financed was important, particularly when it came to bonds for railroads or power generation. Politics was also important, as new regimes sometimes refused to honor commitments made by their predecessors. And, of course, the collapse of world trade in the 1930s contributed to both foreign exchange problems and political willingness to pay. But arguably the most important factor was that after 1929 most Latin American countries were no longer able to float new issues. In other words, the disappearance of new money preceded most of the defaults.

In many cases, it appears that borrowings in the late 1920s were being used to meet earlier bond obligations (hence the decline in bond quality noted above). When this source of funds dried up, countries like Bolivia or Peru were no longer able to meet outstanding obligations. The situation was similar to that of Germany, which was willing to repay past loans only so long as the net transfer of capital was favorable.

And what happened after default? This issue is obviously crucial to an understanding of how real financial resource flows were affected by the decision to default. While specific settlements varied, they almost invariably cost creditors dearly. While nominal principal amounts were preserved, interest payments were often slashed and interest arrears seldom made good. Creditor security arrangements such as sinking funds were generally weakened as well. All in all, the net payout to creditors ranged from as much as eighty cents on the dollar to almost negligible amounts of four or five cents on the dollar. In such cases, creditors usually set up some form of committee to work out a settlement, often under the bondholder protection committees of New York or London. The use of outside technical experts to recommend how a borrower could implement economic reforms that would facilitate repayment was also a common part of these creditor-sponsored committees.

An interesting example of the negotiation and revaluation process is that of Mexico, which defaulted on its late nineteenth century government borrowings and railroad bonds in 1914. A succession of debt agreements followed throughout the 1920s and 1930s. One tentative agreement broke down when the Mexican government found itself unable to borrow new money in New York (for irrigation development). In 1930 creditors agreed, after a detailed independent economic analysis of the Mexican economy, to reschedule outstanding bonds. This agreement consolidated all government bonds into a single new forty-five year bond secured by the whole of the customs revenues. The bonds were structured into two parts, with creditors whose earlier loans had been secured being senior to those whose loans had been unsecured. Interest was to start at 3 percent (well below the current market rate for developing country bonds which was then in excess of 5 percent) and gradually rise to 5 percent by the middle 1930s. By wiping out virtually all interest arrears and lengthening the maturity to forty-five years, the maximum annual annuity would be only about 60 percent of what was to have been paid out under an earlier, abortive agreement (itself well below what was called for under the terms of the original credits). In any event, this agreement, like its predecessors, was repudiated by the Mexican government. Only after Mexico had begun to receive mas-



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sive U.S. wartime assistance in 1942 was there a lasting bondholder agreement. Creditors were dealt with far more harshly than under any of the earlier abortive agreements. Arrears were wiped out for less than one percent of their nominal value. Less than 20 percent of the nominal principle of the bonds was to be recovered at interest payments which ranged from 24 to 1 percent of the original coupons. Debts equivalent to nearly $510 million in 1942 were paid off for less than $45 million, payment being roughly nine cents on the dollar. And this settlement came despite Mexico's ability to meet its existing obligations easily—the projected flow of U.S. aid alone could have done this. The decision to settle on the basis of nine cents on the dollar was, therefore, not related to Mexico's economic strength or ability to pay.

The lack of convergence between improved ability to repay and willingness to do so was not unique to Mexico. The bond defaults of the 1930s, whatever the specific trigger, were associated with temporary illiquidity rather than insolvency. But the end of illiquidity during the World War II boom did not necessarily bring repayment. A 1951 report by the National Bureau of Economic Research addressed precisely this point:

> The great majority of countries that serviced their loans in full in 1937 did so in 1949; most of the countries in default in 1937 were in default in 1949. What is the explanation of this consistency? Were the economies of countries in default worse off during these 12 years than those of solvent countries? For many countries this cannot be the explanation. Half of the defaulted loans were issued by Latin American countries that were highly prosperous during the war with booming dollar exports. Many good issues, on the other hand, were from countries that were invaded and occupied and suffered grievously. Belgium, France and Norway, for example, kept paying all they owed; others, such as Peru and Bolivia, paid and pay almost nothing. Though South American countries did improve service on their loans, not one of those in default in 1937 decided to pay its creditors their due.

Drastic revaluations in creditor asset values did not come as an unexpected shock to the international financial markets. As there was an active secondary market in these non-performing securities, their traded price anticipated the eventual discount agreed to by the borrowers. This made it easier for the final owners of the bonds to accept a fraction of the nominal amount due, as they had sometimes actually paid less for these non-performing bonds than they proved to be worth after the agreement. The revaluation of these debts was an ongoing process based on market factors which reflected expectations about repayment—expectations which became self-fulfilling when the borrowers used the market price to determine their settlement offer.

The final point about the bond defaults of the 1930s is that defaulting debtors were blocked from new capital flows until creditor groups accepted an offer for revaluation. Credit rating agencies such as Moody and Standard and Poors tracked foreign bonds outstanding. More importantly, the experiences of the 1920s and 1930s led investors to demand a formal rating before new bonds could be issued. Such ratings reflected the agencies' opinion on the legal enforceability of the bond contract, the country's ability to service the debt, its political willingness to do so, and other creditor concerns. The experience with past bonds was obviously taken very seriously by the rating agencies; countries like Mexico and Brazil were never subsequently able to obtain "investment grade" ratings for their bonds.

NO REVIEW of past international debt defaults would be complete without some mention of U.S. defaults. The federal government's creditworthiness was put on a sound footing by Hamilton and preserved—in the face of strong political pressure—by Gallatin. Rampant Anglophobia and chronic mistrust of bankers tempered much of the republic's early financial history, but the federal government was able to avoid the embarrassment of default even under the exigencies of the Civil War. Financing that conflict



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required a good deal of ingenuity on the part of Jay Cooke, who invented the modern retailing of government securities. This huge national debt, sold at premiums three to four times those applied to reliable private borrowers, was nonetheless honored. It was subsequently refunded at attractive rates after the Civil War and eventually retired.

Despite the absence of a central bank, and occasional crises that required the likes of J.P. Morgan to advance gold, the U.S. Treasury was able to meet its foreign obligations until FDR's administration. Under the guise of supporting U.S. farmers, the New Deal severed the traditional gold standard. Even more important, a joint resolution of Congress rescinded the "gold clause" in all private and government contracts. This clause had been introduced during the Civil War period of high inflation to protect investors against a depreciating dollar by giving them an option of repayment in physical gold. By declaring the "gold clause" void (an act subsequently ratified by the Supreme Court) and devaluing the dollar, the U.S. Treasury in effect defaulted on its promise to pay bondholders the full gold equivalent.

Unlike the federal government, state government defaults seldom involved legal subtleties. Beginning in the 1830s, local politicians eager to obtain electoral advantage from building infrastructure like canals or railroads caught on to the possibilities of debt. These bonds were sold to Europeans in boom periods. They were then defaulted upon during depressions. Before the Civil War, nine of the eighteen states which had borrowed abroad were in default. This experience was much commented upon in British circles where it was taken as indicative of a general flaw in the American character. As a result, U.S. railroad issues were boycotted in Britain until the 1870s—which doesn't appear to have slowed their construction. But the most striking fact about these state defaults was their permanence. Unlike other defaulted debts surveyed, some of them were never settled. Given this exceptional characteristic of U.S. defaults, this review concludes with the rather sad description of the current state of negotiations on one such defaulted bond (as printed in the 1985 Annual Report of the British Council of Foreign Bondholders):

> The external bonded debt of the State of Mississippi, the outstanding capital amount of which is estimated to be nearly US$7 million, went into default in 1841, was repudiated by amendment to the Constitution of the State of Mississippi in 1875 and remains in default. Although earlier letters from the Council to successive State Governors remain unanswered, the Council succeeded in 1984 in entering into correspondence with the State Treasurer. No reply, however, has been received to a letter addressed to him in June 1985.



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# Khrushchev in America

Charles A. Sorrels

THERE HAVE BEEN only three U.S.-Soviet summits held in the United States: Eisenhower-Khrushchev in 1959; Johnson-Kosygin in 1967; and Nixon-Brezhnev in 1973. Of these, Khrushchev's twelve-day visit in September 1959, ending with two days of discussions with President Eisenhower at Camp David, was the only one during which the Soviet leader had an extensive opportunity to travel outside of Washington or presidential quarters (Camp David and San Clemente).

### *Berlin: A Lever for Negotiations*

IN NOVEMBER 1958 Khrushchev ignited a crisis over Berlin. The Soviets challenged the Western allies' status there, issuing an ultimatum on the 27th with a deadline of six months: If an "adequate agreement" (i.e., abandonment of Western rights) on Berlin had not been reached by then, the Soviets threatened, they would turn over control of access to West Berlin to the East German government.

The three Western powers—the U.S., UK, and France—agreed that the Soviets' proposed moves were illegal. In December, they responded to the Soviet ultimatum by declaring that their rights in Berlin must and would be upheld. While indicating a willingness to talk about Berlin in the wider framework of "the German problem," they declared that no negotiations with the Soviet Union could be conducted "under menace or ultimatum."

Nevertheless, in February 1959 they proposed—and in March the Soviets accepted—a meeting of Soviet and Western foreign ministers to consider "questions relating to Germany, including a peace treaty with Germany and the question of Berlin." The conference was scheduled to begin on May 11. As the *Washington Post* noted that fall, Khrushchev had "manufactured the Berlin crisis and used it as a lever for talks with the West."

The Soviets clearly wanted a full-scale summit instead of, or in addition to, the foreign ministers' meeting. Khrushchev had derided in advance a foreign ministers' conference as "a bog without an exit" in an "election" speech on February 25, shortly after the Western powers had proposed such a conference. Eisenhower, however, was wary. At a press conference in late February he explained his reservations in detail, citing his experience with the 1955 Geneva summit:

> Q. Sir, Khrushchev seems to be trying to get a summit conference instead of a foreign ministers' conference. Does this parliamentary or procedural difference change make any difference to us? [sic]
>
> A. I would say this: All of you people are quite well acquainted with the constitutional difficulties that a president incurs when he goes

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abroad for one of these long conferences. But on top of that, there is this very great psychological reason: When the people of the world understand there is going to be a head of state or a head of government summit conference, they expect something to come out of it; and a feeling of pessimism and, in a way, hopelessness, I think, would be increased if you entered such a meeting and then nothing real came out of it as, indeed, was the case at Geneva.

There was a great deal of talk about the spirit of Geneva, but frankly, before we went there, while we were there, and afterward, our government said one thing: the proof of the sanity and value of this Geneva meeting was going to be shown within the next few months when we went down to the concrete problems. And there we went over in October—the foreign ministers did—and we got exactly zero progress.

Now, I think it would be a very grave mistake to go to a summit conference unless there was some kind of preparation so that you could know the world could recognize the progress made.

Despite the president's coolness to the idea, pressure for a summit continued to build throughout the spring. The British government under Prime Minister Harold Macmillan, especially as it faced a national re-election campaign in 1959, had been urging Eisenhower to hold a four-power summit. In a June 3 note to Macmillan, echoing his public statements, Eisenhower again forcefully stated his feelings:

> As you know, I adhere to my position that a summit meeting based on nothing more than wishful thinking would be a disaster. The world would interpret such a move as being virtual surrender, while Soviet prestige would be enhanced. . . . I repeat that the production by the foreign ministers of a reasonable paper for us to work on at a summit conference, together with the assurance that there will be no further attempts to restrict our rights and privileges with respect to Berlin, constitute the very minimum that would justify a summit.

But in mid-June the president learned that during a trip to Moscow in February, Macmillan had agreed in talks with Khrushchev to press for a summit without conditions—thereby confirming the validity of the U.S. concern that the Soviets at the foreign ministers' meeting in Geneva were stalling for time, because they assumed the British government would urge a summit regardless of the outcome of the conference.

Eisenhower was fighting an uphill battle. At a press conference on June 17, he replied at length to what had become an exasperatingly frequent question about his willingness to attend a summit:

> What I want to point out is that there is developing in the world sort of an idea that heads of government can take themselves away from their normal posts and go and do a lot of things that cannot be otherwise accomplished.
>
> Now, the foreign ministers of free countries are people who go to conferences clothed with a very great deal of authority. The governments involved normally try to establish limits within which their foreign minister can negotiate. He communicates with his own government every single night. . . .
>
> Now, everybody knows that when you are dealing in a dictatorship, there is only one man, finally, that can make the decision, a firm decision, a final decision. Therefore there has grown what I believe to be a false doctrine that we should revamp our entire diplomatic procedures in order to go to a summit meeting every thirty days or so. . . .
>
> To my mind, if these foreign minister meetings cannot prepare the ground and sow some of the seed for an accord, then I see no use whatsoever for trying to have a harvest when there is no planting and no tilling.

On July 7, Khrushchev, in talking with some American governors visiting Moscow, openly indicated his desire to visit the United States and his support for a return visit by Eisenhower to the Soviet Union. The president, learning of Khrushchev's hint the next day by a question at a news conference, expressed reserve, distinguishing between ceremonial state visits and serious substantive discussions, and noted the need for prior consultation with allies. He specifically indi-



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cated that if a meeting with Khrushchev would involve "real tough negotiations, it would have to be studied very thoroughly before you would make any move in that direction." Despite these disclaimers, in his memoirs, *Waging Peace*, Eisenhower recalled: "As soon as the press conference was over, however, I called Secretary [of State] Herter to say that the Khrushchev suggestion might possibly provide a device to break the stalemate. If such an exchange were to come about, a meeting in a fairly secluded spot would be desirable."

Eisenhower decided to invite Khrushchev to the United States and to express a willingness to visit the USSR if progress at the foreign ministers' conference had been made. Soviet Deputy Premier Kozlov, having opened the Soviet exhibition in New York (the counterpart to the U.S. exhibit in Moscow at whose opening Vice President Nixon and Khrushchev had engaged in the "kitchen debate"), was leaving New York to return to Moscow on July 12, and provided a convenient channel of communications. The president instructed the undersecretary of state for political affairs, Robert Murphy, to convey through Kozlov that Eisenhower would be glad to meet Khrushchev informally before a four-power summit, *if* the foreign ministers' conference in Geneva achieved results that would justify such a summit.

To his shocked dismay, he learned a few days later that in fact the invitation had been conveyed without the precondition. Meanwhile, Khrushchev had set the minimum length of his visit by volunteering, in his quick acceptance, that he looked forward to a ten-day visit and that there was much that he wanted to see. At a special press conference on August 5, Eisenhower announced ("with anything but enthusiasm," he later recalled) the Soviet premier's impending visit, scheduled for September 15–27. That same day the foreign ministers' conference ended, without reaching agreement on "even inconsequential points." Indeed, the Soviets had hardened their position in Geneva, where Gromyko in early June had presented a renewed ultimatum with a deadline (the deadline declared the previous November had elapsed without incident in May). Looking back, the president described his perspective at the time:

> The residual effects of all this caused me some chagrin: I now had to meet with Khrushchev and allow him to tour our country in spite of the fact that he had deliberately engineered the breakdown of the foreign ministers' meeting. . . .
>
> In many ways, especially from the viewpoint of precedent, I regretted that normal diplomatic channels, even including formal meetings of foreign ministers, were being so markedly ignored. Prospects for even the slightest progress in easing world tensions now seemed to lay, for the time being at least, in direct contacts between the heads of governments.

### *Differing Objectives*

EISENHOWER repeatedly stressed that he did not intend to "negotiate" with the visiting Soviet premier or act as a spokesman for the Western powers. He insisted his limited objective was "to melt a little bit of the ice that seems to freeze our relationships with the Soviets." At a press conference on August 27 the president declared: "I myself am not conducting negotiations for anybody else with Mr. Khrushchev. I am conducting conversations, trying to explore his mind, to see whether there's any kind of proposal, suggestion, that he can make, that would indeed make him a real leader in the search for peace in the world." To explain his purpose and reassure key Nato allies, the president traveled to Europe shortly before Khrushchev's scheduled arrival in the U.S., talking with Chancellor Adenauer in Bonn, Prime Minister Macmillan in London, and President De Gaulle in Paris. The president's trip was credited with solidifying the alliance at a crucial juncture.

Echoing Eisenhower, Khrushchev too declared that his purpose in making the trip to the United States was to "melt the ice of the cold war." The importance of Khrushchev's visit in legitimizing the superpower status of the Soviet Union was recalled years later by



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Arkady Shevchenko, who had been an official of the Soviet foreign ministry in 1959:

> A veneer of propaganda obscured almost everything related to Khrushchev's visit to the United States. He was obviously delighted that President Eisenhower had invited him to pay an official visit. The mere fact of the invitation was important to him: He saw it as the United States' admission that the USSR was an equal with whom solutions to international problems must be sought. The Soviet Union had striven persistently for such status. Khrushchev felt that his visit would bring him and the Soviet Union prestige, regardless of whether the talks with Eisenhower succeeded or failed.

In his recorded recollections Khrushchev stated his belief that the invitation from Eisenhower had been prompted by pressures of public opinion in the United States for an improvement in relations with the Soviet Union: "Eisenhower was being forced to listen to voices in democratic circles and in the business community which advocated concrete measures to reduce tensions." Further, "the reason we were proud was that we had finally forced the United States to recognize the necessity of establishing closer contacts with us. . . . The main factors forcing the president to seek improved relations were our economic might, the might of our armed forces, and that of the whole socialist camp." Whether or not these contributed to the pressures for a summit, the end result of the trip was to make Soviet foreign policy seem less threatening. As a scholarly post-mortem by Richard Stebbins put it, "What Khrushchev's visit . . . accomplished, however, was to surround the long range Soviet program with an air of moderation and reasonableness in which it appeared somehow less menacing and less irreconcilable with basic Western interests."

The major themes Khrushchev reiterated during his visit were not new. A preview of them was, in effect, provided in his lead article, "On Peaceful Co-existence," in the Fall 1959 *Foreign Affairs*, excerpted in advance in the *New York Times*. The only significant surprise in his "peace offensive" campaign, intensified while in the U.S., was his proposal for "complete and general disarmament within four years," under which all nations would abolish their weapons and armed forces, leaving only forces needed to maintain internal security.

Khrushchev unveiled his dramatic suggestion in an address to the UN General Assembly on September 18; he had stimulated interest beforehand by announcing in a speech two days earlier that he would be making a disarmament proposal at the UN. Apparently aimed at Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Khrushchev's proposal was quickly and generally judged by a skeptical press and UN observers to be utopian. Although U.S. and UK officials avoided critical public comments, the French delegate to the UN dismissed it as "absolutely empty."

The *Washington Post*, in a September 19 editorial entitled "Utopia's Salesman," observed: "this self-described realist suggested a very unrealistic reliance in his version of complete disarmament. He proposed the destruction of all existing nuclear weapons. The sad fact is that there is no known scientific means of ascertaining whether concealed stocks of nuclear weapons are actually destroyed. Mr. Khrushchev surely is aware of this, and his prescription is therefore either an appeal to gullibility or an invitation to more distrust." The *New York Times* editorial the same day declared: "What he actually accomplished in a speech that ranged over many world problems was to produce a propaganda mountain and a disarmament mouse. . . . The Soviets still seek a one-sided Western disarmament based upon paper pacts the scraps of which litter their path to empire." The following day, however, the *Times* noted that "Western observers regarded the proposal as so broad as to be virtually meaningless but conceded that it would have great propaganda impact." [See box]

In addition to his general proposal, Khrushchev had presented a partial disarmament plan, including an "atom free zone" in Europe (the *Times* described it as "aimed at



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the waverers in Western Europe," designed to undermine Nato's cohesion, and "largely a repetition of time-worn Soviet themes—the United States must liquidate its bases overseas, withdraw its troops from Western Europe, and in effect abandon the North Atlantic alliance.")

The themes Khrushchev stressed reflected his objectives, and thus were clearly intended to stimulate or play on both fear and hope. For example, he prefaced his disarmament proposal at the UN with a graphic description of the horrors of nuclear war. The *New York Times* editorialized at the beginning of his visit about his "campaign to sell the United States on the proposition of 'peaceful coexistence'—on Soviet terms." Midway through his tour, the *Times* reviewed what it called a "heavy propaganda offensive": "One theme dominated his utterances—that he was a man of peace dedicated to ending the cold war and ushering in an era of peaceful competition between the United States and Soviet Russia."

Khrushchev put forward three general lines of argument for the acceptance of peaceful coexistence. First, he raised the specter of a devastating nuclear war as the likely result of a continuation of the "cold war" and the "arms race." Rather than follow that perilous path, he suggested that the time was at hand for a new period of relaxation of tensions, high-level meetings, and negotiations. References to the possibility of a nuclear war were coupled with the reassuring declaration that a "new world war is no longer a fatal inevitability" and recognition that the Soviets would not escape the conflagration's devastating effects. As he declared in his *Foreign Affairs* article, "Should a world war break out, no country will be able to shut itself off from a crushing blow."

Second, he stressed the mutual interests of the peoples of the U.S. and USSR—both of whom wanted peace—in establishing good relations and peaceful competition.

Third, he emphasized that the West or "capitalist world" had no realistic choice other than to embrace the Soviet formula of "peaceful coexistence" because the communist world had become too powerful to be challenged by military force. That Soviet formula involved acceptance of Soviet gains, reconciliation with communist regimes (e.g. East Germany), and abandonment of the cold war, for which the West was held responsible.

The Soviet premier made reassuring as well as directly or indirectly threatening statements, coupling a "soft" line and a "hard" one—well reflected in the *Times*' September 17 banner headline, "Khrushchev Has An Arms Plan; Asks Peace Effort Lest Earth Turn Into 'Ashes and Graves.' " Ten days later the paper looked back: "Sometimes Mr. Khrushchev had seemed to be making an offer and a threat at the same time, as when

### *Rational Animals*

On its September 19 front page, the *New York Times* provided a humorous historical perspective on Khrushchev's general disarmament plan, noting that the Soviets had first proposed "total" disarmament in November 1927 and then again in February 1932. The second effort prompted the Spanish delegate, Salvador de Madariaga, to ask the Soviet delegate, Maxim Litvinov, if he remembered "the fable about the animals' disarmament conference": "When the animals had gathered, the lion looked at the eagle and said gravely, 'We must abolish talons.' The tiger looked at the elephant and said, 'We must abolish tusks.' The elephant looked back at the tiger and said, 'We must abolish claws and jaws.' Thus each animal in turn proposed the abolition of the weapons he did not have, until at last the bear rose up and said in tones of sweet reasonableness, 'Comrades, let us abolish everything—everything but the great universal embrace.' "



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he indicated that a rejection of his rosey-hued disarmament plan would mean war. Sometimes he had seemed to be appealing for brotherhood and sometimes he had seemed to be suggesting the futility of resistance to the growing Russian might." Eisenhower noted later that in the months prior to the visit the Soviets "continued their wearisome policy of alternating sweet words with sabre-rattling."

A good summary of the Soviet position was contained in a study prepared by the University of Pennsylvania's Foreign Policy Research Institute for the Senate Judiciary Committee in 1960:

> The strategy pursued by Khrushchev represents no startling departure in its essentials from classic Communist strategy. . . . The chief novelty of Khrushchev's strategy derives from the fact that he is operating from a position of greater strength than any of his predecessors. This allows him not only a great deal of flexibility in combining a "hard" line with a "soft" line, but also lends greater credibility to both: to his threats because they are backed by evidence of growing power; to his blandishments because they are offered ostensibly not from weakness but from strength. . . . The soft line, or what might be called the 'sleeping pill' approach, is intended to lull the West, to lower its military vigor and political vigilance. . . . The hard line, or what might be called the 'face the facts' approach, is intended to sell the West the idea that it has no alternative but to reconcile itself to a shift in the world power balance in favor of the communist bloc.

### *Tactics and Behavior*

KHRUSHCHEV'S principal tactic during his visit was to attempt to orchestrate a crescendo of pressure on Eisenhower on contentious subjects, especially the status of Berlin (which Khrushchev had been threatening for months to change unilaterally). This effort began prior to and lasted almost to the end of their private talks at Camp David. It was not until shortly before lunch on September 27, the day of his departure, that Khrushchev finally agreed to Eisenhower's insistence that the threat of a renewed ultimatum relating to Berlin be lifted. Even that agreement (reached during a private discussion with only a Soviet interpreter present) nearly fell apart after Khrushchev talked with advisers such as Gromyko immediately before lunch. Eisenhower described the incident in his memoirs:

> Immediately after luncheon we met again. Khrushchev said he would not want his concession to appear in joint communiqué at the end of our meeting.
>
> "This ends the whole affair," I said, "and I will go neither to a summit nor to Russia."
>
> But he quickly interposed to say that before he could publicize such a statement he needed an opportunity to explain to the members of his own government the reasons that led him to his decision. Consequently he asked me to wait until Tuesday morning to make a public statement describing the agreement and he would, in his own capital, attest to its accuracy. This I accepted. (Forty-eight hours later I made a public announcement of the agreement and he responded immediately in the same vein.)

Soviet space achievements provided a timely backdrop for unsubtle pressuring. As Eisenhower recalled, "Three days before his arrival the Soviets shot a large rocket to the moon [Lunik II]. This was a noteworthy feat, but the propaganda purpose of the timing was blatant." Less than forty-eight hours before Khrushchev's arrival on a huge TU-144 transport at Andrews air force base near Washington, D.C., on September 15, Lunik II landed on (crashed into) the moon. This was judged by some observant diplomats in the *New York Times* to be "the 1959 Soviet version of nineteenth-century gunboat diplomacy—a show of strength preceding diplomatic action." In his first meeting with the president, in the oval office, Khrushchev gave him a replica of the object the Soviets had sent to the moon. During his tour of the U.S. Khrushchev frequently boasted, sometimes with disdainful humor, about Soviet space superiority. (For example, eating his first American hot dog in Des Moines, Iowa,



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he commented, "We have beaten you to the moon, but you have beaten us in sausage-making.")

Khrushchev tried to establish in advance that a failure to make progress in relieving international tension would be the fault of the United States, not the Soviet Union. As the *Times* reported on September 20, "In short, the premier's first week in the United States seemed to add up largely to an attempt at a softening operation and at setting the stage for taking credit for any relaxation of tension that may result from his exchanges with the president."

This was apparent in his first major speech, at the National Press Club on September 16. The speech contained some conciliatory remarks; Khrushchev said that both sides must "press for a fundamental turn in the climate of international relations" and that it was "necessary for each side to meet the other half way." Nevertheless, the *Washington Post* noted the next day, "as he ticked off the major issues and discussed them, he gave no evidence or hint of what the Soviet Union is prepared to do to meet the U.S. and its allies 'half way.' He gave every indication that the bargaining at Camp David will be hard and long." Throughout his trip he stressed that the cold war was the responsibility of the United States, which could end it if it desired.

On several well-publicized occasions during his visit Khrushchev became visibly outraged. His behavior suggested that he had a very thin skin and was inclined to find offense to his or his country's dignity where none may have been intended. In some instances, however, there was unambiguous provocation or rudeness that prompted his angry response.

Khrushchev's first public display of sensitivity to what he regarded as an insult or affront occurred on the first full day of his visit, when he responded to ten questions from the audience at the National Press Club after his speech. The first question called forth inflamed indignation by raising the embarrassing issue of what Khrushchev himself had done during the Stalinist rule he had denounced. His brief show of anger did not receive much attention at the time. Instead, the media noted his demonstration of political skills in handling questions. As Arthur Krock observed in the *New York Times* the next day, "His relish for debate was prominently on display in his answers to the questions addressed to him. . . . It is a medium of human competition in which proficiency is measured in part by the skill with which a debater can evade an embarrassing question while seeming to make a responsive answer. The other units of measurement are forcefulness, conviction, intelligence, grasp of the subject, wit and good nature and indignation reflected at the right times." By such measures, Krock judged that Khrushchev had, with few exceptions, "matched the best performances of politicians put to the question in democratic parliaments."

The next incident involved clearly rude behavior from the audience. His busy schedule in New York City included a speech to the Economic Club. When, in the question and answer period after the speech, Khrushchev was evasive about why the Soviets jammed American radio broadcasts, censored dispatches, and denied general access to American publications, some hecklers in the audience shouted "Answer the question!" and "But what's the answer?!" Khrushchev shook his fist and shouted a retort that ended with the declaration, "If there is no desire to listen to what I have to say, I can go! I have come here not to beg anything. I come here as a representative of a great country."

The most violent and well-publicized outburst occurred the next day in Los Angeles, where the visit hit bottom. It appeared to Henry Cabot Lodge, U.S. ambassador to the UN and the president's personal representative as escort, that "the Khrushchev visit to America was becoming a horrible failure." (The White House felt compelled on September 22 to express concern over Khrushchev's treatment on the West Coast, saying, "This purpose of constructive meetings at Camp David is not served by any



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personal discourtesies extended to the chairman during his visit.")

Khrushchev's day in Los Angeles began badly when the mayor's greeting—at a secluded, secure area of the LA airport—consisted of only a one-line statement. Understandably insulted, Khrushchev put aside a prepared text and gave an equally brief reply. He then spent four hours at the 20th Century Fox studios, where its president provoked polemical exchanges and where there was an attempt to embarrass Khrushchev by photographing him in an undignified juxtaposition with dancers on the set of the movie "Can Can." He was openly annoyed to learn that a trip to Disneyland he had been looking forward to had been cancelled because of security concerns; venting his ire, Khrushchev asked, "What do you have out there, cholera? Or have gangsters taken hold of the place who can destroy me?" (Actually, the Soviet security detail protecting him had agreed with the decision to drop the visit.)

The Soviet leader's most belligerent display of anger occurred at a Los Angeles civic dinner given for him on the evening of September 19. He took violent issue with the introductory speech given by the mayor, which he regarded as provocative in its citing of Khrushchev's oft-quoted prediction or threat to "bury you." He insulted the mayor in response and then stunned the audience with a threat to break off his tour and return home, a threat to renew and intensify the cold war, and an ominous boast of assembly-line production of ICBMs already underway in the USSR. Later, Foreign Minister Gromyko came to the hotel suite of Ambassador Lodge to register Khrushchev's angry complaint that the U.S. government itself had been organizing provocative questions and that police cordons were preventing the Soviet leader from meeting ordinary people.

The next day Khrushchev, able to rest briefly on the train trip to San Francisco, recovered his composure. He was cordially greeted at the stops in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo, and security was relaxed so that he could leave the train and shake hands on the platform. Expressing his relief at having been freed from "house arrest," he told the press, "I've seen some real live Americans" and been "allowed to approach the people and look them in the eye." As he had requested, he rode in an open car in San Francisco.

With the exception of a heated dinner exchange with Walter Reuther and other labor leaders (during which Khrushchev was flushed, shouted, and pounded the table),[1] the reaction to his visit in San Francisco was quite positive. His manner became ebullient throughout the remainder of his itinerary, to Iowa and Pittsburgh (where enthusiastic crowds cheered him, with only a few hostile signs such as "We butcher hogs, not people" and "No Munich on the Potomac") and back to Washington for talks at Camp David.

Some of Khrushchev's outbursts may have been calculated—part of his pressure tactics leading up to the final discussions. The *Times* noted that some observers theorized Khrushchev "was deliberately trying to create the image of a dangerously explosive man in the hope that it might soften opposition to his demands at the negotiating table." A senior *Times* columnist, Arthur Krock, had earlier raised the possibility that some of Khrushchev's expressed anger was deliberate rather than provoked. On September 22 he laid out that hypothesis:

> . . . Do these frequent outbursts of a temper over which Mr. K[hrushchev] seemed temporarily to have lost control denote a fundamental trait of this particular dictator's nature, or are they a work of consummate dramatic art?. . . The opinion of the majority of those consulted

[1]Reuther: "You exploit the workers of East Germany."

Khrushchev: "Where did you dream that up?"

Reuther: "If you don't exploit them, why should 3,000,000 of them cross the border into West Germany?"

Khrushchev: "You are hopelessly sick with capitalist fever. . . ."

Reuther: "Do you have the credentials to speak for the workers of the world?"



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[who have dealt privately with the Soviet premier] is that we merely are witnessing the performance of a very great actor, the most alert and diligent of all propagandists, who coldly calculates the consequences of everything he may say or do, and only says or does what he has carefully concluded will serve his purpose of communist world domination without war.

It seemed to some that after Los Angeles Khrushchev realized that, although he could use discourtesies to his benefit (the British mass circulation *Daily Mail* ran a headline "Cut Out the Baiting"), his tantrums could on balance have a negative effect on the American public's emerging appraisal of him.

### *Public Relations*

A MAJOR PURPOSE of Khrushchev's visit was to advance Soviet foreign policy by making a positive impression upon opinion in the United States and elsewhere in the non-communist world. As Richard Stebbins noted,

Every detail of the visitor's itinerary, so far as it lay within Soviet control, appeared to have been calculated for the fullest effect on American opinion and, beyond it, on the world at large. The Soviet people read glowing press accounts of the welcome supposedly accorded their leader. . . . Khrushchev . . . appeared as much concerned with the reactions of the Soviet and international audience as with those of his American hosts. What he failed to achieve in converting American public opinion to his point of view may have been compensated in his eyes by the tour's worldwide impact.

Khrushchev spoke to the American people, via the attentive press, on no less than twenty-one occasions, and throughout his visit received intense and sustained coverage: Seven hundred reporters and photographers were at the National Press Club for his first speech; on the special eighteen-car train carrying him from Los Angeles to San Francisco, ten cars were reserved for the press, through which he toured as if campaigning in a U.S. election. At the end of his visit, after returning from Camp David with the president, Khrushchev held a press conference which was carried live by ABC and NBC. Shortly thereafter he gave an hour-long address to the nation (to which NBC had the exclusive television rights).

The extensive television coverage of the visit was noted in a *Washington Post* article on September 20: "The role of television in creating an American image of Khrushchev is hard to overestimate. He has been on every TV screen in every city every day and on for hours in countless cases. Not since the televised Army-McCarthy hearings of 1954 . . . has television so concentrated on a single man." The massive press corps following the trip proved particularly cumbersome at times and, in a way, became an obstacle. As James Reston commented in the *New York Times* the day after a visit to an Iowa farm:

. . . Mr. Khrushchev cannot see America for all the cops and photographers. There are so many newsmen reporting his trip that they change the course of events. They are not the obscure witnesses of history, but the principal characters in the drama, whose very presence is so ubiquitous that most of the time Mr. Khrushchev is addressing them, or addressing others with them in mind. The newsmen are not reporting this visit; they are smothering it, and each other at the same time. . . . All this, mind you, gives Mr. Khrushchev no pain. He is less interested in seeing America than in having the world see him in America. . . .

Khrushchev sought in part to go over the head of the U.S. government directly to public opinion, and in the first part of his journey stressed his belief that the American "people's" desire to end the cold war was not necessarily shared—he implied or stated directly—by some "leading circles." By the end of the trip, he seemed to have grasped the wide support for President Eisenhower's foreign policy, and to understand that he could not drive a wedge between the general public and the administration in Washington. It seems ironic now to read the *Washington Post*'s



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final editorial comment on the publicity campaign: "We also may hope that the American press, television, and radio representatives and their foreign colleagues also learned. The admittedly great interest in the visit did not justify a three-ring circus, with reporters and cameramen stumbling over each other to get a glimpse of the guest. Surely some sort of self-restraint in advance is desirable for future visits."

While it is impossible to gauge precisely the long-term impact of Khruschev's visit on public opinion in the United States, Gallup opinion surveys taken in 1958 and 1959 provide some perspective. There was majority support in the U.S. and even more support in major Nato allies for the visit shortly after it was announced in August 1959. Almost two-thirds (64 percent to 23 percent) of the U.S. public and about three-quarters of the French and British publics approved. (In West Germany 84 percent approved and only 6 percent disapproved.) The U.S. agreement to an exchange of visits was seen primarily as a "new effort to reduce tensions," not as a "softening in basic United States attitudes towards communism" (73 percent to 7 percent in the U.S. and 78 percent to 11 percent in West Germany).

Gallup surveys taken shortly before and then during and after the visit revealed that Khrushchev's image had improved in several respects (e.g. "intelligent" and "cooperative") but declined in one aspect, being untrustworthy (although almost one-third registered "no opinion" even after the visit). In response to the question, "Just your own impression—what type of person do you think Premier Khrushchev is?" the results were:

| | *Before Visit* | *After Visit* |
|---|---|---|
| Intelligent | 11% | 18% |
| Cooperative | 2% | 9% |
| Unyielding | 12% | 9% |
| Untrustworthy | 12% | 22% |
| Domineering | 10% | 6% |
| Ruthless | 9% | 5% |

A substantial majority (59 percent) in the U.S. after the Soviet leader's visit thought he was *not* "sincere in wanting to work out an effective disarmament plan," with only 20 percent believing he was sincere in such an effort.

### *The Learning Curve*

IT IS NOT POSSIBLE to determine with confidence what Khrushchev himself learned from his visit. His recollections, published in 1974, may be deliberately misleading or reflect a faded, inaccurate memory. Comments and evaluations by Khrushchev-watchers during the trip varied as to whether he was even disposed to learn or did in any event take away important impressions made on the lengthy, transcontinental journey.

Khrushchev made it clear on his arrival that his purpose was not self-education but rather the propagation of Soviet themes of ending the cold war through "peaceful coexistence" and the inevitable victory of the Soviet brand of "socialism." An insightful article by James Reston in the *New York Times* on September 20 was entitled "The Man Who Came to Teach and Not to Listen." During his trip, Khrushchev reiterated his contention that he was already very well-informed, by his intelligence services among others, about prevailing conditions in the United States.

In discussing his impression of Khrushchev from his encounters in Moscow, Vice President Nixon told Eisenhower: "Khrushchev is a man with a closed mind and the only thing he'll understand is the power of America and the unity of her citizens." On the other hand, Henry Cabot Lodge, from his experience escorting the Soviet premier, concluded that Khrushchev "was a good listener and gave the impression of being a man with an open mind—but on certain subjects only. . . . It was clear that Khrushchev had seen and learned a great deal. He was most observant, intelligent, and perspicacious. I had the feeling that he looked at us quite differently on September 27 than he had on September 15."

Khrushchev was a product of the Soviet



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political system, which places a premium on ideology as a basis for viewing the world. This ideological filter reinforces the general human inclination toward selective perception, that is, to focus on only those experiences that are consistent with prior dispositions and to discount or ignore inputs that are inconsistent with preconceived viewpoints.

One powerful preconception Khrushchev apparently brought with him was observed by President Eisenhower in the oval office during their first meeting. The president recalled that despite his insistence to the contrary, Khrushchev "refused to believe that we have in this country a free press, without governmental censorship" and declared, "Of course, the American government gets printed what it wants printed and is able to suppress what it does not want printed." Eisenhower later concluded that during the course of his visit there had been "some progressive lessening of Khrushchev's preconceived notions regarding control of American publicity media." Khrushchev also apparently came to appreciate the independent role and authority of local and state governments, and to realize that their treatment of him was not controlled or originated by the Eisenhower administration at the federal level.

Eisenhower was disappointed when Khrushchev made "no expression revealing his reaction" to seeing thousands of automobiles homeward bound from central Washington to the suburbs—a scene of American affluence that the president had specifically arranged by choosing the afternoon rush hour for a helicopter tour of the Capitol area. (Instead, Khrushchev "openly expressed his admiration for the helicopter itself" and later ordered three of them for his own use.)

Some observers judged it unlikely that Khrushchev would be open to new learning. In its lead editorial on September 20 the *Times* opined: "It is, of course, impossible for any visitor surrounded by Mr. Khrushchev's entourage and the necessary mass of protocol to get down to any grass roots. He couldn't do it if he wished, and in light of his obvious preoccupation with his own inflexible preconceptions there is no reason to suppose he would want to try. Our hope must be that some of our spirit as a people will 'rub off' on him." After Khrushchev's angry outburst in Los Angeles, Chalmers Roberts—accompanying the visitor's trip—observed in the *Washington Post*:

> The dominant theme of businessmen who have talked with Khrushchev as well as of the speeches of Henry Cabot Lodge all along the route has been that the American economic system today is a far, far cry from the capitalism described by Karl Marx. As far as anyone can see, this hammering away at Khrushchev, plus whatever visual evidence of which he has caught from railroad, auto and plane windows, has made no visible dent whatsoever. One cannot be certain of that to be sure, but there is no doubt of the sense of frustration among those who have been trying to 'educate' the Soviet leader.

Four days later, Roberts remained pessimistic: "He really cannot comprehend our system. You might say that he is being exposed to the non-material aspects of our free system, beginning with free speech. But he has eyes and he sees not, as far as the intangibles of America are concerned."

Other observers were less gloomy. Marquis Childs, in his *Post* column on September 25, stated:

> There is reason as the tour nears its end to be somewhat more optimistic on this score. At the outset it seemed that the barriers were too great, that given his own iron conviction of the inevitability of communist triumph and the vast publicity apparatus between the visitor and the normal way of life, he would take away nothing.
>
> But he has shown himself to be more of an individualist than had been suspected. The evidence is that he is far less doctrinaire than some of the ambitious members of the party hierarchy who are travelling with him. . . .
>
> The Americans at his side during the trip believe that a great deal has got through to him, despite the handicaps. He has spoken several times of the way Americans are housed, the



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number and attractiveness of the one-family dwellings he has seen from the train. The multiplicity of highways has impressed him.[2] He publicly noted America's richness after he had had a glimpse of a supermarket and after his wife had spent more time in several stores in San Francisco.

Whatever his ultimate private judgment, and this above all we shall never know, he can at least have some idea of what an utterly different society ours is.

During his brief tour of an IBM plant in San Jose, after lunch in the cafeteria, Khrushchev asked two employees making parts for computers about their wages, method of payment, and how they spent their income. When one stated that he spent $100 a month for a house he was buying, Khrushchev interjected, "You mean for an apartment?" The worker replied, "No, a house. I am buying a house." On the way back to San Francisco, Khrushchev made an unscheduled stop at a housing development under construction where he asked workers similar questions.

*The Aftermath*

THE INFORMAL discussions in seclusion at Camp David covered, in a haphazard way without following a scheduled agenda, a wide range of topics beyond Berlin, including the situation in Laos, nuclear testing, trade, exchange programs, and defense establishments' budgetary requirements. But the conversations kept coming back to the overriding topic of Germany and the status of Berlin. On that subject, as we have seen, there was some progress on the very last day in the "cliff-hanger" circumstances which the Soviets typically create for leverage in negotiations. The two leaders agreed that negotiations on Berlin "should not be prolonged indefinitely but there could be no fixed time limit on them." This met the president's preconditions for agreeing to schedule a four-power summit and to a then-anticipated visit by the president to the Soviet Union.

In his memoirs, President Eisenhower summarized his appraisal of the Khrushchev visit and the Camp David talks:

> As Khrushchev left the United States, we thought he had come to realize that he had a bear by the tail on the Berlin issue, and was relieved at having found a way out with reasonable dignity. I am sure that he was pleasantly surprised with the degree of consideration with which he was treated in the United States. . . . I felt that he had thrown off a bit of that peculiar defensive complex so noticeable in some Russian officials. . . .
>
> It seemed that at the end of the Khrushchev visit there was less public pessimism than when he came to our shores. He himself later talked much about "the Spirit of Camp David," but it was a term that I never used or deemed valid.
>
> Nevertheless, a crisis over Berlin had been averted without the surrender of any Western rights. True, the crisis had been an artificial one of Khrushchev's own making, but on the other hand it carried with it the danger that by overstepping himself, he might have gotten into a position where a far worse situation could have developed for all nations. At least now it seemed that we should have a better atmosphere in which to approach such questions as expanding exchanges of visitors and information between East and West, finding an acceptable solution to the problem of a divided Germany, and developing mutual trust through satisfactorily enforced disarmament treaties, even though limited at first in scope.
>
> But as always, we would have to wait for deeds to determine the sincerity of Soviet words.

The *New York Times*, shortly after Khrushchev's departure, expressed its guarded appraisal in an editorial: "unless the Soviets follow words with deeds, the 'Spirit of Camp David' could evaporate as quickly as did the 'Spirit of Geneva' in 1955, and for the same reason—the Soviet disregard of all

[2] In his Camp David conversations with Eisenhower, however, Khrushchev claimed that he was not impressed with American homes and automobiles, but instead was appalled at the waste of resources.



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pledges and promises." Khrushchev himself, in discussing his strategy toward the West with Arkady Shevchenko a year later, according to the latter cynically noted one utility of the "spirit of Camp David": "As for the United States, for the time being he saw little hope of changing its attitude, but there were many opportunities for 'kindling distrust' of the Americans in Europe. 'We threw a little scare into the Nato countries last year with the spirit of Camp David,' he said in recalling his 1959 talks with President Eisenhower. 'We must work further at turning the United States against Europe, and Europe against the United States. That was the technique Vladimir Ilyich [Lenin] taught us.' "

The removal of a sense of urgency about Berlin after the Camp David talks improved the atmosphere of international relations. This atmospheric change proved quite temporary, however, as Khrushchev four months later (in January 1960) resumed his threatening statements about Berlin and aborted the four-power summit in Paris in May 1960—ostensibly because of the U.S. U-2 reconnaissance aircraft shot down over the USSR. As he departed Paris, Khrushchev repeatedly expressed his hope for arranging another summit—after the upcoming American presidential elections. In August of the following year construction was started on the Berlin Wall.



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# The Strategic Importance of Mass

Robert L. Goldich

SINCE THE Civil War, American attitudes toward military affairs have been marked by a persistent unwillingness to recognize the importance of quantity, mass, and attrition in the raising, manning, and structuring of our armies. A corresponding faith in the superiority of quality, lightness, and maneuver as determining factors in how the United States should structure its armed forces reflects longstanding if unrealistic attitudes of American society and culture toward military matters. The emphasis of some "military reformers" on tactical and operational rather than strategic aspects of war is a recent manifestation of these attitudes. The unwillingness of the United States to acknowledge the centrality of manpower-intensive mass armies in modern war, in light of the importance that the Soviet Union has traditionally attached to them, results in a fundamental imbalance of military capability between the two countries that neither technological nor doctrinal manipulation can fully redress or obscure.

Compared to other countries, the United States has had over the past 125 years a large population, an immensely productive economy, and a high degree of technical and organizational competence—all characteristics suited to, indeed required for, the waging of modern mass war. The United States was in fact the *sole* participant in the first mass war in history, the Civil War of 1861–1865; was a major if belated participant in World War I; and was one of the two largest belligerents in terms of military power deployed in the field (the Soviet Union being the other) during World War II. In light of these intrinsic assets and practical experiences, why has the United States developed an attitude toward war which in effect throws away many of its advantages in the area of mass, and which refuses to institutionalize methods and procedures for waging manpower-intensive ground warfare even after circumstances temporarily force their adoption? To answer these questions, an analysis of the American response to the eighty-four years of mass warfare between Bull Run and V-J Day is instructive.

If ever an American war was waged with massed combat power, it was the Civil War. The North, with a population of 23,000,000, mobilized a total of 2,213,000 men throughout the war, of which at least 365,000 died. The South, with a white population of 5,000,000, mobilized between 600,000 and 1,500,000 men, of which an estimated minimum of 160,000 died. The proportions of casualties to personnel serving and to the total population are on a par with those of the major European combatants of both world wars. Victory was won by completely subjugating the rebel states and compelling the total surrender of their armed forces. It was ultimately achieved by a relentless campaign of both economic and military attrition

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against an enemy of roughly equal technical and organizational sophistication, if not mobilizable resources.

The Civil War showed that in the modern era, if governments had enough authority to compel a sizable proportion of the adult male population to serve, and there was a parity of military skill and technological expertise between combatants, victory could be achieved only by a long "wearing-out battle." Presuming the comparative popularity of victory over defeat, it would be logical for both popular sentiment and professional military judgment to celebrate, revere, and emulate the attitudes and techniques of the victorious Union army—at least within the states that won.

Yet this did not happen. In the 120 years since Appomattox, popular attitudes toward the military conduct of the war have continued to reflect a romantic image of an agrarian South, ruled by an aristocracy with noble qualities, being subjugated by a urban industrial North, devoid of traditional virtues. The tactical elegance and austere aloofness of Robert E. Lee are cited as more worthy of emulation than the strategic clarity and amiable conviviality of Ulysses S. Grant. Confederate tactical successes such as Jackson's Valley Campaign of 1862 and Lee's victory at Chancellorsville in 1863 tend to be studied in depth, even though they bore no strategic fruit; tactically superb and strategically productive Union victories such as Grant's reduction of Vicksburg in 1863 and Sherman's Atlanta campaign of 1864 have rarely been subjected to minute dissection. That the Confederacy held out against the Union onslaught as long as it did is attributed to superior Confederate military leadership (despite examples of as much ignominious failure and incompetence on the part of Confederate as of Union generals) or the superior fighting ability of Confederate soldiers due to their cultural or ethnic backgrounds (despite as many cases of Confederate rout and panic as there were of Union). The Union successes in strategy formulation and resource mobilization, which gave the Union army decisive superiority in mass and which ultimately rendered the Confederate army's supposed tactical and operational superiorities irrelevant, are rarely celebrated.

The situation is much the same regarding World War I. As John Terraine has remarked, World War I was "an indigestible lump" to Americans for a long time, due to the very brief active American participation in the war. However, the Anglophilia of educated Americans, together with receptive American attitudes, has led, over time, to wholesale acceptance of views about the war held by British elites. These include:

- A blanket denigration of Allied (particularly British) generals and tactics on the Western Front between 1914 and 1918 as callously wasteful of human life and displaying no recognition of the technological changes in modern war, particularly increased firepower. This is often contrasted with allegedly superior German military training, tactics, organization, and command ability.
- A belief that the Western Allies deployed excessive military resources to ground combat on the Western Front, to the detriment of action—or the logistical support of action—at sea or in other theaters of war.
- General acceptance of the assertion that the experience of the Western Front showed the superiority of the "indirect approach" against an enemy's most vulnerable and unguarded points compared to the "direct approach" against the main body of an enemy's armed forces. The Allies are criticized for using only the "direct approach," accounting for their heavy casualties and the attendant military, demographic, psychological, and social dislocations of the postwar era.
- More analytical study of the tactical methods and successes of the Germans (who lost) than of the Allies (who won).

In short, Anglo-American conventional wisdom concerning World War I asserts that the victorious Allied armies, and the generals who led them, were inferior to the defeated armies and generals of the Central powers. Allied victory is frequently ignored; when mentioned, it is assumed to have resulted be-



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cause the Central Powers were overwhelmed by vastly superior resources, and therefore to be less worthy of detailed analysis.

ALTHOUGH it has taken some time to develop, due to the moral odium attached to the Axis powers, particularly Nazi Germany, a similar set of attitudes has arisen regarding World War II. The process has included the following attitudes and patterns of study:

- Emphasis on the leaders, structure, and techniques of the German army over those of the Soviet, British, and U.S. armies. A corollary of this emphasis is the denigration of Allied military skills, accompanied by the acceptance of Allied material and economic superiority in a manner of blithe if not derogatory dismissal of any other explanation of the result.
- Greater interest in the Pacific war (in the case of the American public) or the desert campaigns of North Africa (in the case of the British public) than in the European campaigns of 1944–45, although the latter led directly to victory, involved the largest number of forces, and resulted in by far the heaviest casualties.
- In the context of the recent commemorations of the fortieth anniversary of the 1944–45 campaign in northwest Europe, the striking lack of interest or knowledge about virtually any military activities in that theater of operations after June 6, 1944. The summer fighting in Normandy, the autumn 1944 fighting on the German frontier—even the anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge—all passed unnoticed in the popular press.

Conclusions drawn regarding the military performance of the Germans in both world wars are thus very similar to those drawn about the military performance of the Confederacy in the Civil War. Suggestions that the allegedly superior qualities of the loser should be emulated, despite the fact that they did not prevent defeat, characterize American military-historical commentary.

For instance, great attention has been paid to tactical and operational aspects of wars even where it is undeniable that the centrality of massed ground combat power was the determining strategic factor. The often uncritical, if not adulatory, study of Confederate and German tactical and operational methods enables analysts to avoid the strategic appreciation that intelligent application of superior mass was decisive, worthy of intellectual examination, and was the primary factor that led to victory.

Similarly, more than due attention is paid to theaters or aspects of war where the employment of massed ground combat power was not feasible. Keeping one's eye on the islands of the Pacific, the North African desert, or on air and naval action anywhere insures that it will not focus on the less glamorous, and much more costly ground—and fighting that took place on it—of Russia, northwest Europe, or northern France and Flanders.

Further, the assumption is made that wars between major combatants can be won without sustained fighting between mass ground armies—and attendant major casualties—if there is enough imagination and creativity on the part of the victor. Thus, if Allied generals on the Western Front during World War I had not been technically reactionary, the heavy casualties sustained in that theater of war could have been avoided. If Allied military and political leadership had been more imaginative and placed more emphasis on the outer theaters of World War I, major blows could have been struck at the Central Powers in places other than France and Belgium. If the Union armies under General Grant had displayed more tactical and operational skill, they could have defeated the Army of Northern Virginia during the 1864–65 campaigns without sustaining enormous (by pre-twentieth century standards) casualties.

If Americans are unwilling to acknowledge the centrality of strategically greater mass and overall quantitative superiority as decisive factors in modern ground combat, military experience since the mid-19th century makes such a dismissal of reality intellectually untenable, no matter how emotionally reassuring it may be. When the experiences of institutions and the nations



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that create them over the course of more than a century do not support conventional wisdom, it is time for responsible analysts to reassess their positions. Brigadier John Masters in *The Road Past Mandalay* exposed the central fallacy of the views described thus far as follows:

> . . . against a brave and well-led enemy all war hinges on the ability to destroy the enemy's main armed forces in pitched battle. . . . The reason for this stark fact is that sooner or later one side will attack something—a city, a port, a supply line, the army itself—which the other side must defend. Civilian leaders have always hated the idea and tried in a thousand ways to find a way around it. But—to take recent history alone—after needless expenditure of blood, time, and treasure they have always had to call on the Grants, Pershings, Fochs, Haigs, Montgomerys, and Slims to do the job. None of these men necessarily did their job in the best possible way; they commanded their nations' armies because they had a single-minded grasp of the nature of the job itself.

The simple fact is that unless there is a gross disparity in doctrine, technology, or morale between combatants, the result of modern armies engaging on the battlefield is tactical and operational deadlock, where gains are small and the costs high. Under such circumstances, the scope and utility of tactical innovation is limited and, due to the rapidity of adaptation in time of war, likely to be temporary, due to enemy countermeasures.

Thus, during the Civil War, Grant—and, backing him with the intellectual and psychological acumen he is usually credited with in pursuit of other goals, Abraham Lincoln—realized that the rebellious Southern states had to be subjugated not merely by occupying ground, but by destroying the insurgent armies. Grant's 1864–65 Virginia campaign was therefore costly for two reasons. First, he discarded peripheral or ephemeral objectives and struck directly at that aspect of the Confederacy most responsible for maintaining Confederate independence—the Army of Northern Virginia under Lee. Second, the introduction of long-range rifled muskets, combined with the lack of command and control technology that would enable troops to be deployed on the wide fronts known to us during and after World War I, made offensive operations costly and defensive ones correspondingly less so.

Similarly, heavy Allied casualties on the Western Front between 1915 and 1917 were not sustained primarily because of unimaginative tactics. Casualties were no less heavy in 1914, before the fighting had "congealed" into trench warfare, or in 1918, when a measure of open warfare returned to the battlefield as a result of German *and Allied* mastery of effective mobile operations. The bloodletting of the Western Front took place because it was the ground on which the major armies of the major combatants were deployed—indeed, the only place where they could be deployed. Major General J.F.C. Fuller, not known as an apologist for Allied generalship, has explained the situation clearly:

> In what locality could Germany be most profitably struck? The answer depended on the most practical allied line of operations, which, in its turn, was governed by the location of the allied main bases. They were France and Great Britain, and in no other area than France could the ponderous mass armies of this period be fully deployed and supplied in the field. The main bases and the main theatre of war were fixed by geography and logistics, and no juggling with fronts could alter this.
>
> What [the Allied political leaders] were unable to appreciate was, that should another locality be found in which the enemy's resistance was less formidable than on the Western Front, it would only be a matter of time before the same tactical conditions prevailed. It was the bullet, spade and wire which were the enemy on *every* front, and their geographical locations were purely incidental.

The Allies were also "stuck" because they had to take the offensive to win. Germany had, by carrying out a successful strategic offensive at the beginning of the war, occupied large amounts of Allied territory. It could assure a favorable if less than optimal



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outcome merely by holding what it had. It is instructive that on the first of two occasions when the Germans took the offensive after the trenches had congealed (at Verdun in 1916) they too ran into problems in sustaining the momentum of their attack against resolute and well-organized resistance, and ultimately ground to a halt as did the Allies in similar circumstances. Even in the spring 1918 German offensives in the West, the "tactically superior" German army found itself unable to exploit initial victories, for the same reasons (lack of mechanization and lack of rapid command and control mechanisms commensurate with modern weapons) that constrained the Allies against the Germans later in the same year.

John Terraine, who almost alone of military analysts and historians in the late twentieth century has concentrated on these issues, makes the same point regarding World War II:

> It took a second world war to prove the point (to those who had eyes to see) that evasion would not work, and that attrition would always be grim. In the 1914–1918 war, the Western Front in Northwest Europe came into being as soon as the German armies began to march, and it remained in being uninterruptedly, exercising continuous compulsions on all belligerents, from first to last. The Western front of 1939 collapsed in 1940, and had to be recreated in 1944 by the . . . most elaborate amphibious operation in history. Once again, there were compelling reasons for making the supreme effort of the Western Allies in northern France, and they closely resembled those which had reigned in the previous war . . . No such deployment could have taken place at a greater distance from the base—the United Kingdom . . . There is also food for reflection in the fact that General Eisenhower employed greater human masses in eleven months in this theatre than the British Empire had sent in the fifty-one months of the First World War—and this despite the immensely increased armour and mechanization of 1944–45.
>
> The ultimate irony, however, is that, even so, this was not the main front. The main front was where the enemy's main army stood, and would have to be beaten; in 1864 that was Virginia, between 1914 and 1918 it was the Western Front, from 1941 to 1945 it was the Eastern Front. It was on [the Eastern Front] . . . in battles more fierce, more dreadful, more destructive of human life than any of those fought in the First World War, that the German Army was ground down in the classic manner of the "wearing-out struggle."

In that small fragment of the "wearing-out struggle" which took place in the West, close examination indicates that German tactical and operational superiority was less clear than much recent historiography indicates. Thus, the German army's resistance against larger American and British forces in Normandy during June-August 1944 is often cited as an example of superior German tactical flexibility and cohesion under stress. However, when the Germans mounted counterattacks against Allied forces in Normandy, their tactics and cohesion seemed to be marked by as much fumbling and failure as those of their enemies, largely because the iron tyranny of the Normandy hedgerow terrain made hash of sophisticated tactical attack schemes concocted by *any* of the combatants. When variables such as terrain and current combat experience—as distinct from fundamental conditions of morale, equipment, and doctrine—are taken into consideration, the *Wehrmacht's* intrinsic tactical and operational superiority is by no means clear-cut.

A CENTURY of modern war seems to indicate that attrition is an inevitable concomitant of mass warfare, regardless of marginal differences in tactical or operational skill. Yet American society and the American military system resolutely turn their eyes away from this central aspect of modern industrial war. It is clear that Americans have been willing to *fight* battles of attrition. They have not, however, been willing to *prepare* for them—to institutionalize military doctrine, attitudes, and structures best suited for dealing with attrition warfare. Thus, for example, there is an apparent unwillingness to mobilize and maintain ground



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combat forces commensurate with American population and industrial capacity. Even taking into account American unpreparedness, the pace at which American ground forces entered combat in World War I was glacial, especially when compared to the pace of British mobilization over an equivalent period of time earlier in the war. World War I also saw the beginning of the American propensity for overmanning administration, logistics, and supporting elements at the expense of the "maneuver arms"—infantry and armor—while front-line fighting units of battalion size and smaller were perpetually understrength.

During World War II, the United States mobilized 95 divisions (89 Army, 6 Marine Corps), compared with approximately 300 divisions for Germany and 400–500 for the Soviet Union. This "90-division gamble" was indeed a throw of the dice in terms of strategic resource allocation. By 1945 not *one* division was left in the United States as a strategic reserve, and American ground operations during the war were plagued by an insufficiency of divisions for purposes of rotation, reinforcement, and maintenance of combat effectiveness. At the same time, enormous amounts of money, manpower, and material were expended on air and logistical assets and administrative overhead of infinitely less strategic significance than raw ground combat strength.

Furthermore, the Army ground combat forces—particularly the infantry—had the last access to quality manpower, being left with those remaining in the manpower pool after the Army air forces, Navy, Marine Corps, and the Army ground forces technical branches had "skimmed the cream." For example, General George C. Marshall, as Army chief of staff from 1939–1945, refused to allocate resources to the ground combat forces of a quality and quantity commensurate with their centrality to the warfighting mission. Marshall's example is particularly striking given the fact that he clearly understood the case for high quality personnel and training in combat infantry units (see box).

## *The Good Soldier*

Once the field of action has been reached and the deployment completed, the infantry soldier becomes an isolated individualist, with all the frailties of the individual magnified a thousandfold . . . He lacks a physical rallying point—no ship, no heavy gun, no fortification, nothing but a few scattered buddies. He is a young fellow, depressed by a heavy physical burden on his back, exhausted by long marches of concentration and deployment, and lack of food, and he is virtually alone under the terrific pounding of hostile fires of every character. Of himself, by himself, he can apparently do very little, though collectively he can win the war.

He must be supported by artillery, which means in turn that his platoon commander must have a skilled knowledge of topography and be able to report exactly where his line is established—on ground never seen before and of which he probably has no map. This information, coupled with accurate observations of the enemy's opposing installations . . . must be communicated through an elaborate but hastily established communications system . . . to some distant battery of artillery . . . which the platoon commander has never seen and possibly never will see. It may be necessary to coordinate his isolated activities with an infantry cannon or . . . mortar, and certainly with distant machine guns. He may even have to initiate procedures to secure the support of tanks still miles to the rear. All of this he does, lying on his stomach, under a hostile fusillade, with a diet of gas thrown in for good measure. And what he proposes must be coordinated with the scattered units across a regimental, a brigade, a divisional front, and through its depth of supports and reserves. Altogether, it is the most complicated problem of troop leadership, and requires a higher degree of training and discipline, I believe, than for any other military preparation.

George C. Marshall
*Papers, Vol. 1:*
*"The Soldierly Spirit,"*
*December 1880–June 1939*

The lack of willingness to prepare for battles of attrition can further be seen in the



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inability to devise a replacement system capable of maintaining the personnel strength of ground combat units in wartime. During the Civil War, with few exceptions, replacements were furnished only rarely to regiments. Consequently, an infantry regiment authorized 1,000 officers and men could frequently muster only 200–400. At the same time, new regiments were being formed behind the lines with much of the manpower that would have been better used in bringing experienced regiments, with a core of veterans, back to full strength.

During World War I, the U.S. replacement system broke down completely, and the American Expeditionary Force had to cannibalize four and designate seven other divisions (out of the forty-three which reached France) to meet the replacement and support manpower requirements generated by only six months of combat—the last six months of the war being the only time substantial numbers of American ground combat troops were actually in battle. During World War II, the replacement system broke down again, and although no divisions were cannibalized—there were too few to break up—repeated hectic culls from the ranks of service troops, educational assignees, and other nonessential elements were required to supply enough ground combat soldiers during the 1944–45 campaigns.

In Korea and Vietnam, U.S. ground combat units at battalion level and below were often understrength, despite swarms of soldiers in rear areas. Rifle companies and platoons in Vietnam often dropped to between 40 and 50 percent of strength even without heavy fighting, due to endless details and detachments. To the extent that the replacement system did function effectively in both post-1945 American wars, it had to absorb the strain of mandated rotation of personnel out of the war zone after a specified time, as well as replacing casualties. The negative effects of such rotation on combat effectiveness have been well-documented.

The United States has been unable to confront, intellectually or organizationally, the rude fact that in sustained ground combat, soldiers are a critical resource that cannot be employed and utilized without depletion, and that adequate provisions for their replacement must be made. It seems likely that if ammunition shortages had reached the scale of infantry replacement shortages in all four major American wars of the twentieth century, public scandal would have resulted. Yet the units supported by the guns firing the ammunition were always chronically short of men, with at least as much detriment to their combat effectiveness, and the response of American military and national institutions was tepid—or evasive—at best.

ONLY TENTATIVE suggestions are offered here regarding the underlying social, cultural, and philosophical reasons for American unwillingness to come to grips with the importance of massed combat power in modern war, and the attrition warfare that inevitably results when roughly comparable massed armies clash.

First, geopolitical circumstances have not emphasized to Americans, generation after generation, the importance of massed combat power. The lack of a sustained ground threat to the North American continent has enabled the United States, throughout most of its history, to avoid maintaining a mass army. Even in the post-World War II era of American superpower status, our ground forces have remained comparatively small. We have chosen to rely on strategic mobility, allied ground forces, and coercive diplomacy backed by threats of strategic nuclear destruction rather than maintaining a mass army comparable to those of our major adversaries. We have thus been granted intervals in which to forget the significance of massed combat power even when we have employed it. The nations of continental Europe, particularly the Soviet Union, have not been so fortunate.

American geographic isolation from the need to develop a tradition of massed combat power may have been reinforced, however, by a variety of American political and philo-



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sophical traditions. American institutions and beliefs, for example, are deeply rooted in concepts of limited government and private autonomy. The intellectual roots of these concepts are found in eighteenth-century British—and therefore colonial American—constitutional history, and can be traced back even further to seventeenth century rationalism. The mass social and political mobilization involved in modern industrial war and the deployment of mass armies is antithetical to these concepts of restraint, rigid separation of that which is public and that which is private, and limited intrusion of public authority into the economic and social relations between people.

Related is a fundamentally conservative amalgam of agrarian nostalgia and resentment of accelerated social and economic change. Modern industrial war is the antithesis of traditional concepts of human combat. In modern ground warfare the enemy is seen in the open and met at close quarters much less frequently than in pre-industrial battle (although it does still happen). There is reduced scope for individually heroic battlefield confrontation between soldiers. Enormous firepower results in the physical alteration of the landscape and impersonal, industrialized death. Groups and classes traditionally excluded from full participation in war, and hence in society generally, are mobilized in support of the war effort, breaking down hitherto sacrosanct social barriers. Modern war thus resembles the industrialization and urbanization that accompanied the Industrial Revolution, but at an accelerated pace. The sorts of changes that took place over decades during the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries took place within a few years from 1914 to 1918 and from 1939 to 1945.

Few events, in short, have better signaled the permanent and decisive break man has made with his pre-industrial past than total war. It is therefore not surprising that he rejects those aspects of modern industrial war that exemplify its radical departure from traditional images of warfare, and simultaneously clings to aspects that comport with acceptable concepts of individuality and personal combat. Seen in this context, the persistent unwillingness of Americans to concede openly—and, therefore, politically and militarily—the importance of massed combat power can be understood more clearly. It may represent a desire to minimize the subsuming of individuals into mass organizations, both politically and culturally. To structure American military institutions around the central importance of mass would seem to repudiate several concepts and attitudes which are integral to American society and culture. These traits are so fundamental to the American character that attempts to implement policies contrary to them, frankly presented, could (and has) cost persons making such attempts political support.

Contemporary debate over military and defense policy is equally reflective of these concepts. Much of the agenda of the admittedly heterogeneous "military reform" movement can be seen as a conservative reaction to the effects of permanent social and economic change on the conduct of war. In general, "military reformers" emphasize the traditional and humanistic tactical and operational levels of war—British regiments, German staffs, Israeli tactics and training. They are correspondingly less inclined to probe more technocratic and depersonalized strategic issues and concepts—American resources, Soviet manpower and materiel, Egyptian strategy and policy. It is not surprising that they tend to be more interested in, and attempt to prove the superiority of, the tactical and operational skills of defeated Imperial Japan and Nazi Germany compared to those of the victorious Allied powers, while being comparatively less attentive to superior Allied resource availability and management. Both attitudes reinforce traditionalism.

A substantial proportion of "military reform" literature also asserts that individual qualities such as initiative, daring, and insight can be so institutionalized that they can outweigh superior enemy resources, winning through "maneuver warfare" by striking an enemy's vulnerable points, his flanks, his



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rear, his lines of communication—everything except the main body of enemy forces that provides the most formidable obstacle to success. Certainly maneuver, subterfuge, and initiative are important, and it would be folly to neglect them in the structuring, training, and doctrinal formulation of U.S. ground forces. However, much U.S. "military reform" literature contains an extreme imbalance in their favor—particularly in the way they are alleged to be capable of overcoming, rather than being an indispensable adjunct to, mass, quantity, and attrition.

The same concerns and emphases can be found in U.S. defense policy and force structure as well as in the views of iconoclastic critics. The United States, for instance, although it clearly has the economic and demographic resources to match Soviet massed material and manpower (quantity), chooses to conserve its assets and superiorities in these areas, and concentrates on technological superiority only (quality). We maintain an active and reserve component ground force structure of 32 divisions; the Soviets maintain approximately 190. American strategic nuclear forces emphasize accuracy (quality), to the minimization of throw-weight (quantity); the Soviets strive for both, thus greatly enhancing the flexibility of their strategic nuclear forces. We emphasize a few large aircraft carriers, a substantial number of naval surface combatants, and approximately 100 attack submarines (quality); the Soviet navy, while experimenting with large carriers and using a large number of surface combatants, has 300 attack submarines and a profusion of smaller combatant craft (quantity).

It might be posited that military analysts, political leaders, and American soldiers who stress maneuver, surprise, elite forces, and the "indirect approach" are, and have developed as, political-military realists. Limited by the social constraints mentioned above, U.S. military theoreticians and politicians may have had to settle for "people-poor" forces and doctrines for employing them. It can be argued that successive American administrations have consistently divined a maximum number of soldiers that the American people were willing to either conscript or pay for, and established that number as the nation's military manpower goal, whatever the actual requirements of peacetime deterrence or wartime operations. Responsible parties, therefore, may have opted to take this as a given and seek ways to enable manpower-poor forces to fulfill their missions successfully, and attempted to compensate for the lack of mass with sophisticated and technology-intensive forces and weapon systems. The alternative—a fundamental reorientation of American attitudes—may not be feasible in the absence of a clear, direct, and immediate military threat.

American neglect of mass is no less a military liability, however, for being understandable in the light of American geography, history, political institutions, and social philosophy. It inhibits the United States from fully utilizing formidable assets for national defense purposes. It encourages Americans to think of military problems as susceptible of solution primarily through superior doctrine and technique, which appear to be cheaper in money and lives than greater resources and effort—although it is the latter that twentieth century experience has shown to be the decisive factors in modern industrial war. If we ever become more willing to acknowledge the centrality of mass in modern ground warfare, we will finally be coming to grips with the realities of war and casting off social attitudes that are highly detrimental to our military capabilities.



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# The Idol of Stability

Fred Charles Iklé

IN POLITICAL THOUGHT, the boundaries of ideas tend to be blurred. It is easy, therefore, to trespass from a perfectly valid proposition to a horrid falsehood. And in foreign policy or military strategy, where so many things that matter are intangible and where cause and effect are hard to trace, this blurring of ideas is not easily corrected.

Modern democratic nations promote political philosophies in which ideas of "stability" are prominently featured. And, to be sure, specific concepts of stability, properly limited, can play a central, indeed a beneficial role in international affairs. But stability is an idea that has spread beyond its proper habitat, like a fungus infesting much of contemporary discourse on foreign affairs and strategy.

The citizens of democracies want peace; and the experience of history confirms that stable borders help preserve the peace. The greatest alliance of democracies, the Atlantic Alliance, was created to stabilize the borders in Central Europe. The citizens of democracies prefer lower military expenditures; and a "stable" military balance would seem to serve this objective. Hence, East-West parity (in overall military strength) and a stable relationship of mutual deterrence (between U.S. and Soviet nuclear forces) have both become dominant ideas in Western strategic thought, at least since the 1960s. The keen Western interest in arms control negotiations reflects the hope that the democracies can induce their adversaries to embrace these ideals of "arms stability."

The result of this quest for stability is, at best, a mixture of successes and failures. The territorial integrity of the Atlantic Alliance, without question, has been fully preserved in peace. And, on the Korean peninsula, once the integrity of the republic in the south was restored by a costly war, a stable boundary between friend and foe has also been maintained. Yet, the fact that "stability" in this limited sense has been achieved and preserved in Europe and Northeast Asia does not mean that the democracies, and their alliances, are safely sheltered in a stable world.

While containment has succeeded in Europe and on the Korean peninsula, it has failed elsewhere. In many parts of Asia, Africa, and the Caribbean, the Soviet Union has acquired military outposts as well as de facto colonies.

While Nato and Warsaw Pact forces have never fought each other, Soviet-supported

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Cuban forces are now fighting in Nicaragua and Angola. The Soviet-backed Vietnamese are fighting in Cambodia. And in Afghanistan the armed forces of the Soviet Union will soon have been fighting twice as long as they fought Hitler's Wehrmacht.

While nuclear weapons have not been used since 1945, the competition in nuclear armaments has never ceased. Arms control negotiations—conducted almost without interruption since the end of World War II—have clearly failed to preserve a stable military balance, not only in nuclear arms but in conventional arms as well.

As if oblivious to such constant turmoil, the psyche of democratic alliances remains oriented toward a different world. It yearns for a world of stable, tranquil boundaries that peacefully contain the Soviet empire, a world in which the military competition has been arrested and where a stable balance of forces deters aggression, a world fixed in equilibrium by a network of East-West agreements. Such notions of stability have become woven into the fabric of our strategic consciousness. For many people in the free world, in fact, the word "stability" sums up the goal of Western strategy.

To develop a strategy, however, it is necessary to do more than set ultimate goals. A strategy requires that a course to these goals be charted and pursued in face of obstacles and opposition. As Winston Churchill once remarked: "However absorbed a commander may be in the elaboration of his own thoughts, it is necessary sometimes to take the enemy into consideration."

Failure to take the enemy into consideration is a pervasive weakness of a democratic alliance. Many officials in democratic governments are hesitant even to admit that their nation faces an enemy, let alone to name him. Note the frequent use of euphemisms—such as "the other side" or "a potential aggressor"—in Western official language referring to the Soviet Union. Scores of books and articles written by Western experts refer to a possible attack on our alliances by "an aggressor," as if alluding to some fairy tale creature like Rumpelstiltskin whose name must not be spoken. Note, also, how loudly President Reagan was criticized for calling the thing by its name. Yet, the Soviet Union is indeed an empire—the only empire left; and this empire is assuredly not benign.

Grafting onto the Czarist tradition of imperial expansion, Lenin, Stalin, and their heirs have seized every opportunity to expand the empire under Moscow's control. Lenin created much of the ideology, institutions, and techniques of the system we now confront as our enemy. That system is characterized by a self-perpetuating, centralized monopoly of power; by the expert use of violence to maintain this monopoly and to extend its reach; and by the steady accumulation of military strength to back up and consolidate the expansion. All this has been described again and again. Yet, so often the significant point is lost: that the nature of modern Leninism forces upon us a continuing competition—a demanding, dangerous, fierce competition. And we cannot compete effectively if we exclusively pursue the ideal of stability.

THE UNITED STATES and its allies have to compete with the Soviet bloc in at least three arenas. The first is that of boundaries and military bases, geographic access and the global extension of politics and power. We might call this the geostrategic competition. The second arena is that of technological advantage and relative economic strength. The third arena of competition, of course, is the arms competition that determines the balance—or imbalance—of military strength.

The geostrategic competition must be judged from a long-term, historical view and from a global perspective. Without denying the importance of Western Europe for the security of the United States, we must look beyond the unchanging frontlines in Europe to gauge how we have fared in the geostrategic competition. The successful defense of Nato's so-called central front (the eastern border of the Federal Republic of



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Germany) must not be allowed to suffer the fate of the Maginot line. Even near the European central front, in the Mediterranean region, the situation has deteriorated substantially since the Atlantic Alliance was created. In the 1960s, the ratio of naval presence in the Mediterranean between the U.S. and the Soviet navy was four to one in the U.S.'s favor; today it is one and a half to one in the Soviets' favor. Wheelus in Libya was an American base until 1969; and there were no Soviet bases on the Red Sea, as there are today in Aden and Ethiopia.

Equally deleterious were the changes on another, "southern front" of Nato—the Caribbean region. In the 1950s, U.S. military planners faced no military threat from that region. Today, Cuba's military capabilities and its Soviet installations would pose a serious challenge in time of war. Hostile military assets on Cuba could be used to threaten critical sea lanes to Europe. And if, on the American mainland, the military buildup in Nicaragua continues with growing Cuban involvement, this would pose an even more serious danger. Today, the United States still enjoys an open, unarmed border to the south, and U.S. treaty commitments in Latin America are not militarily demanding. U.S. forces man no military front in Central America, as they do in Korea and Europe. If in the future the United States should have to divert military resources to contain a "second Cuba" on the American mainland, Nato's central front in Europe would indeed have been outflanked. Many among our European allies have been underestimating the seriousness of this possible development and, hence, have failed to support, or have even opposed, President Reagan's policy toward Nicaragua. Their Eurocentric view of Nato's security causes them to believe that the East-West competition for strategic real estate has been stabilized. They seem to forget that the Atlantic Alliance is meant to protect the territorial integrity of all its members, including that of the United States.

A mistaken faith in stability as a goal also affects Western views of the economic and technological competition. The United States has now achieved a sound consensus with its allies that the transfer of militarily significant technologies to the Soviet bloc is not in our interest. Together with our European allies and Japan, we have made solid progress in interdicting the theft of strategic technologies. One might say we have learned, at last, to protect the natural patrimony of our creative, free societies. But the importance of protecting our advantage in overall economic strength is seen less clearly. The superior economic potential of the West inhibits Soviet expansion. The Soviet leadership learned long ago that were democracies to become sufficiently aroused, they might mobilize their full economic strength to expand massively their military forces.

The security of the Western alliances demands that they maintain overall economic superiority. To recognize this fundamental imperative is not to advocate economic warfare. But the cold facts are these: The members of our alliances devote between 1 and 6 percent of their Gross National Product to the common defense, while the Soviet government diverts about 16 percent of its GNP to its military. The stronger the Soviet economy relative to the West's, the easier it will become for the Soviet leaders to overtake us militarily. If the Soviet Union achieved parity with the West in economic strength, it would be even harder for the democracies to induce restraint in an arms race.

Some European officials have expressed the view that we should help the Soviet Union to modernize its economy and that our help toward improving the economic development of the Soviet bloc would contribute to European stability. Such help will do the opposite. First, it will make it unnecessary for Gorbachev and his successors to provide more freedom to their people in order to improve the Soviet economic performance. Second, it will lead to a larger Soviet GNP, thus making it easier for the Soviet leadership to continue or even to accelerate its military buildup.

The global arms balance between the



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Western alliance and the Soviet bloc is another arena for competition in which the position of the Western democracies has deteriorated. The declining U.S. advantage in nuclear arms from 1960 until 1980 is partly attributable to the belief of previous U.S. administrations that arms stability represents a shared objective of both Washington and Moscow. In its search for stability, the United States assumed the Soviet leaders would settle for nuclear parity, and expected that the arms competition could be brought to a stable resting point.

In fact, U.S. decisions in the SALT I negotiations invited the Soviet Union to build up to parity in those arms where the United States had an advantage; but did not seek to bring the Soviet Union down to parity in areas where they had an advantage. Hindsight makes it clear that U.S. policymakers were misled by their faith in the universal attraction of "stability." Just because we no longer sought to maintain superior strength was no reason for a good Leninist to halt his forces at parity. On the contrary, our bourgeois goal of stability invited the Soviet military planners to surpass us.

Not only did many Americans hold the view in the 1960s and early 1970s that the United States and the Soviet Union shared the goal of stable nuclear parity, but they also made the assumption that Moscow and Washington were agreed that their strategic forces should be designed only for retaliation in response to nuclear attack, not to defend against attack. The ABM treaty was supposed to seal this compact by making permanent, as it were, mutual vulnerability by consensus.

Some twenty years later and twenty years wiser, we now realize that the Soviet leaders held to different objectives. They had never settled for this consensual vulnerability. Of course, they were quite ready to consent to the self-chosen vulnerability of the West. But for themselves they had other ideas. They built up offensive forces that could decimate the U.S. nuclear forces; they invested in huge construction projects for underground command posts to protect the *nomenklatura* from nuclear war; and they continued large programs to improve their air and missile defenses.

Fortified by hindsight, it is easy to see today why the United States could not have succeeded in its quest for "stability" in strategic arms, if that stability was to be based on the Mutual Assured Destruction concept. One should have expected in 1972 that the Soviet rulers could not accept a concept of stability that provided for the perpetual preservation of the most mortal threat to the Soviet Union—total destruction that could be unleashed any day by an American president or (in their imagination) perhaps even by "some American general."

In fact, such a strategic order is inherently unstable. It postulates the coexistence for the indefinite future of two elements that are psychologically incompatible: one element consisting of a relationship of trust, fidelity to agreements, and self-restraint to protect the interests of the opponent; the other element consisting of a ceaseless struggle to maintain strategic offensive forces, decade after decade, that could totally destroy the opponent at any moment. In short, the stability of this strategic order is illusory. President Reagan's speech of March 1983 sought to lift the spell of this illusion. Instead of trying to impose stability through a permanent nightmare, his initiative on strategic defense shows the road to a safer future.

PERHAPS THE PENCHANT for stability among many intellectuals in the West reflects a certain moral fatigue. It takes strong and steady convictions to struggle every day, year after year, to uphold the principles of freedom and to defend the pluralistic democratic order while maintaining the military strength to thwart aggression. Those afflicted with this moral fatigue prefer to imagine a world at rest, with guaranteed parity in military power and stable mutual commitments to an agreed international order. Some go so far as to embroider this imaginary stability with the assumption of



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moral equivalence between the Western democracies and the communist world: two "sides" with an equal mixture of the good and the bad, like mirror images of yin and yang.

The Western tendency to regard stability as the be all and end all of global strategy may indeed be a symptom of fatigue. Fatigue is a condition that leads to the blurring of distinctions. Those afflicted by this condition fail to distinguish between beneficial and harmful stability, much as they often fail to see the vast moral difference between communism and democracy. President Carter's ambassador to the United Nations, Andrew Young, once referred to the Cuban presence in Angola as "stabilizing." Perhaps the stability of North Korean despotism is praiseworthy too?

Constant competition in many areas—in ideology, in the economic sphere, for military security—is not an assuasive prospect. Yet, unless we sustain our effort to compete, we will invite a progressive weakening of our ability to cope with future crises. Democracies have to respond to crises; they are generally incapable of pre-empting aggressive moves by their adversaries. Hence, our alliance needs to maintain a margin of safety, a cushion of economic, technological, and moral reserves that can be mobilized in time of need. And since this margin of safety is being constantly contested, "stability"—except in some highly specialized meaning—is not an attainable strategic goal for our alliance of democracies.



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# Biological Weapons & the Limits of Arms Control

Douglas J. Feith

THE STUNNING ADVANCES over the last five to ten years in the field of biotechnology—the advances that have brought into common parlance such terms as genetic engineering, recombinant DNA techniques, monoclonal antibodies, and Nutrasweet—mean more than new foods, pharmaceuticals, and fertilizers. They mean new and better biological and toxin weapons[1] for any country willing to violate what the U.S. government still insists is an international norm against the possession of such weapons. New technology has exploded the standard ideas about BW that prevailed ten or more years ago.

Those old ideas can easily be summarized: BW was thought to be a small problem solved. It was thought small because BW was judged militarily insignificant or, at most, of highly restricted utility. Agents best suited for military use—those, for example, like snail or shellfish toxins, which disseminate well in effective concentrations and work quickly and somewhat controllably—could not be produced affordably in large quantities. Those that could efficiently be produced worked in general less quickly and spread infectious disease, with large attending risk to the attacker as well as the target. BW was deemed a strategic weapon and, from a military point of view, far inferior to other—that is, nuclear—strategic weapons.

Lessening further BW's value was the difficulty of safely storing filled munitions or bulk agent. The dangers of BW storage were made graphic in 1979 when a leak or explosion at a Soviet BW facility in Sverdlovsk caused the release of large quantities of anthrax spores, resulting in many deaths. (The official Soviet explanation has been that the victims died from eating contaminated meat. This, however, does not jibe with the evidence. For example, the military took charge of the clean-up operations, which were the kind required for decontaminating surfaces

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[1]Biological agents (i.e., live organisms) and toxins (i.e., toxic chemicals produced by live organisms) are similar in essential respects and I shall refer to them collectively as "BW."



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coated by an infectious aerosol; moreover, the symptoms of many victims indicated pulmonary anthrax, which results from inhaling, not eating.)

The BW problem was thought solved because over a hundred states, including the major powers, have subscribed to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention of 1972 (BWC), which makes it illegal to "develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire or retain" or transfer biological or toxin agents or weapons. This prohibition, it should be noted, does not extend to very small quantities of agent, possession of which is necessary for "prophylactic, protective, or other peaceful purposes." It was obvious that a ban on tiny quantities could not be policed effectively and, in any event, substantial stockpiles of agent were believed to be a prerequisite for an offensive BW capability.

The BWC came into being three years after the Nixon administration unilaterally destroyed all U.S. BW stocks, renounced future acquisition of BW, and terminated the U.S. BW program, sparing only the facilities for BW defense. This unilateral U.S. action reflected the judgment that BW lacked military usefulness. Under the circumstances, it was not considered necessary that the treaty afford the parties any means of ascertaining each other's compliance. Accordingly, the BWC included no verification provisions. The U.S. government reasoned that it had already renounced BW unilaterally, so there could be no harm in signing an unverifiable ban.

THE BW PICTURE has been radically altered by recent scientific developments. It is now possible to synthesize BW agents tailored to military specifications. The technology that makes possible so-called designer drugs also makes possible designer BW. States unconstrained by their treaty obligations can now produce BW agents of varying effects—different types of fast-acting incapacitants as well as lethal substances. Agents can be developed for various climatic conditions. They can be mixed to complicate identification and their chemical structure can easily be altered to circumvent immunogens or antigens that the other side is suspected to possess.

The BW field favors offense over defense. It is a technologically simple matter to produce new agents but a problem to develop antidotes. New agents can be produced in hours; antidotes may take years. To gauge the magnitude of the antidote problem, consider the many years and millions of dollars that have thus far been invested, as yet without success, in developing a means of countering a single biological agent outside the BW field—the AIDS virus. Such an investment far surpasses the resources available for BW defense work.

New technology can yield BW agents against which a state could immunize its own forces. A state could therefore employ BW without having to require all its own troops in the area to don cumbersome protective clothing. This would enhance BW's military advantage over chemical weapons, such as nerve agent, against which no reliable prophylaxis is available.

It has been hoped that the risk of exposure would help deter BW use, for such exposure might trigger special, undesirable consequences, which, depending on circumstances, could range from the international community's condemnation and possibly sanctions to nuclear retaliation. New technology, however, makes it easier to develop BW agents that would defy identification after use. Their effects can be symptoms of endemic diseases. If it cannot clearly be demonstrated that BW has been used—if, for example, the effects of the attack are attributable to natural causes—the risks of BW use diminish. And this concern is not just hypothetical.

Evidence of many types and from a variety of sources has established that the Soviets and their clients have, in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan, used mycotoxin weapons banned by the BWC. That mycotoxins occasionally occur in nature in certain colder areas has, however, clouded the picture and made



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it easy for states to refuse to come to the unpleasant conclusion that BW has been used and something should be done about it. One must suppose that the Soviets have drawn appropriate lessons from the heated controversy in the West about the natural occurrence theory of Yellow Rain. They can hardly have failed to observe that, at least in part because of that controversy, the costs of BW use have proven altogether manageable, indeed virtually nonexistent.

Bio-engineered substances are now produced around the world in large quantities by various commercial ventures. The production equipment, though newly invented, is not very "high tech." The equipment can be housed in a standard industrial or manufacturing facility that offers no distinctive sign of the kind of production activity occurring within.

An example: Recent discoveries in mammalian cell culture make possible the growth of mammalian cells on the surface of minute beads, rather than on the inner surface of glass roller bottles. The beads provide the ideal environment for the growth of viruses. One small bottle partially filled with beads can now yield quantities of product that previously would have required much larger production facilities. This single technical advance has effectively erased the distinction between a biological agent production plant and an ordinary-looking small scientific laboratory.

The new type of biological production equipment works fast. Substances suitable for BW use can be synthesized within hours—a day or two at most. Seed stock of BW agent—that is, test tube quantities—can be fermented into large production quantities in three or four weeks. After a production run, the equipment, operating more or less as self-cleaning ovens do, destroys within an hour or two whatever residue there is, thereby preventing contamination of the next production run and, incidentally, making it impossible for anyone to prove that a given substance has been produced.

The Soviet Union evidently appreciates the military opportunities created by the biotechnological revolution of recent years. Though U.S. policy remains what it was in 1969 after President Nixon's unilateral renunciation of BW (and there is no thought within the administration to change the policy), the Soviet Union has built a large organization devoted to the development and production of offensive BW. At the very time when Soviet officials were negotiating and signing the BWC, a high-ranking Soviet defector has reported, the Politburo decided to intensify the Soviet BW program.

The Soviets retain stockpiles of BW agent produced in pre-recombinant-DNA days. At known biological warfare facilities in the Soviet Union, they maintain highly secured weapons storage facilities under military control. They have, as alluded to above, transferred BW to their clients in Southeast Asia. They have themselves used toxins against their enemies in the Afghanistan war. And they are developing new means of biological warfare based on current bio-engineering technologies. In other words, the Soviet Union has not only violated the BWC, but every major prohibition in it.

The scale and seriousness of the Soviet BW program are formidable. There are at least seven biological warfare centers in the USSR under military control, all with unusually rigorous security. One such facility constitutes a veritable city with a large number of residents who work and live there full time, isolated from the rest of society. These residents must possess extraordinary security clearances, a requirement that excludes individuals or ethnic groups considered disloyal. The level of effort committed to research on various natural poisons—such as snake venoms—is far in excess of what could be justified to deal with such substances for purely medical or public health purposes.

ALL OF THIS, of course, has implications for both the military and the arms control aspects of the BW problem. The prevailing judgment of years ago that BW is not a militarily significant weapon is now quite unsustainable. BW can be de-



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signed to be effective across the spectrum of combat, including special operations and engagements at the tactical level. No field equipment has yet been developed that can detect BW agents, let alone identify them. There are no antidotes now available against many possible agents. And it is not certain that our troops' protective gear would be effective against all such agents.

As for the arms control implications, these divide into two categories. The first can be labeled "crime and non-punishment," the second "technology overtakes the treaty."

The systematic violations of the BWC by the Soviet Union and its clients undermine the treaty and the anti-BW norm it symbolizes. At least equally grave, however, is the international community's unwillingness to take a collective interest in the evidence of those violations. A treaty may survive breaches by some parties. But can it long survive general indifference as to whether it is violated?

What is unwholesome, I wish to emphasize, is not the failure of many BWC parties to endorse the U.S. government's conclusions about Soviet violations, but their refusal even to inquire into them or urge formal investigation. Some states explain their inaction by asserting that the U.S. government's case is not conclusive. Reasoning like Lewis Carroll's Queen of Hearts, they contend in effect that treaty parties have no responsibility to investigate charges of violations until the allegations are proved.

Many states, after dismissing violation controversies as mere politics between the "superpowers," feel justified in exhorting the U.S. government to conclude new arms control agreements with the Soviet Union. They claim standing on the grounds that they, as members of the international community, are affected by the quality of relations between the powers. They do not in general take this stand cynically, wryly acknowledging its irony. On the contrary, they earnestly assert their responsibility for promoting new arms control treaties and equally earnestly assert, once a treaty has been signed, the propriety of their not heeding Soviet violations. Their earnestness notwithstanding, however, they have dimmed severely the prospects for arms control agreements ever contributing to international security.

The major arms control implication of the new biotechnology is that the BWC must be recognized as critically deficient and unfixable. A state contemptuous of international law and unconstrained by anti-BW public or parliamentary opinion could now maintain an offensive BW capability without violating any of the specific prohibitions of the BWC. (Maintaining such a capability would necessarily violate the BWC's general prohibition; the treaty's purpose, after all, is to ban BW. But if a state refrains from stockpiling large quantities of agent, it would as a practical matter be impossible to prove any such violation.)

Given the ability to produce militarily significant quantities of BW from seed stock within a month or so, it is not necessary to stockpile agent. Such a state need only maintain in a freezer a few hundred test tubes full of seed stock and a production facility which, in the normal course of things, makes agricultural or medical products. In the unlikely event the freezer were discovered, a closed society would have little difficulty characterizing it as part of a research effort for BW defense. In fact, because seed stock can be synthesized in a matter of days, one could get by even without the freezer.

As for the rest of the infrastructure required for a BW capability—such as munitions-filling equipment, aerosolization and dissemination testing, and training—it could be maintained openly. It is essentially identical to the infrastructure entailed in a chemical weapons capability.

While it in no way excuses or belittles the importance of the Soviet Union's BWC violations, the fact is that their compliance with the treaty's specific prohibitions would not obviate concern about their BW capabilities. Because new technology makes possible a massive and rapid break-out, the treaty constitutes an insignificant impediment at best. Its principal failing, therefore, is no longer



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the absence of verification provisions or lack of effective complaint mechanisms, the commonly acknowledged shortcomings, but its inability to accomplish its purpose—to ensure that even states respecting its specific terms pose no BW threat.

What therefore is to be done and not done? First of all, the administration is not interested in altering the long-standing U.S. policy against possession of BW or development of an offensive BW capability.

Second, the United States will remain a party to the BWC and will remain in full compliance with it. Though the treaty has been overtaken by technology as well as systematically violated, the administration continues to support the idea behind it—prohibiting BW.

Third, aware that the BWC serves as a false advertisement to the world that the BW problem has been solved, the administration will make an effort to highlight the nature of the problem and the critical defects of the BWC. The danger of not publicizing these matters is that friends and allies will continue to neglect BW defense work aimed at developing detection and medical capabilities and protective gear.

It is not a pleasant task to deliver so dismal a report to the Congress. The material's distressing nature probably accounts in large part for why it is so little treated in the public debate on national security issues. It is axiomatic that the only successful politics in a democracy is the politics of hope. But can one responsibly inflate hope for an escape from the military problems posed by the Soviet BW program? There can be no *deus ex* arms control in this arena. In answer to those who crave a constructive suggestion under even the least promising circumstances, one can recommend only: Defense.



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# The Containment of John Gaddis

Whittle Johnston

WHEN IT WAS published in 1982, John Gaddis's *Strategies of Containment* was hailed by many as a landmark in the analysis of American foreign policy.[1] Akira Iriye proclaimed the volume an "authoritative synthesis of postwar American security policy." Barry Rubin found it "a superb synthesis of the latest scholarship and documentary evidence." To Wolfram Hanrieder it was "the most succinct, objective, and persuasive analysis of postwar American national security policy that we have available." In Alexander George's view it was a "work of truly distinguished scholarship that makes an invaluable contribution to our understanding of American policy towards the Soviet Union since World War II." Peter Boyle saw it as a "work of major importance"; Joseph Siracusa felt it "should become a point of departure for scholars of modern American foreign policy."

Hanrieder highlighted key sources of the book's impact when he described it as "an impressive example of how to combine the use of primary and secondary materials, historical judgment, powers of synthesis, and an elegant style of writing." Gaddis had demonstrated his talent for the synthesis of a wide range of materials in his first book, *The United States and the Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1947* (1972). In his second work, *Russia, the Soviet Union, and the United States: An Interpretive History* (1978), he showed the same ability to organize a wide range of material into a coherent framework. The impact of Gaddis's third book, *Strategies of Containment*, may well derive from the addition to his gifts for thoroughness, rigor, and clarity of two others: a bolder use of interpretive themes, and the testing of these against the whole sweep of postwar American policy.

On a first reading of *Strategies of Containment* one might be tempted to agree with Hanrieder's judgment that "the absence of sustained methodological considerations . . . is more liberating than debilitating." Most reviewers have been generous in praise of the insight in Gaddis's account and sparing in criticism of methodological shortcomings. It is only as one grasps the incompatible levels of his argument, the questionable premises underlying his concept of strategy, and the consequences toward which his policy judgments point that one appreciates the high

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[1]John L. Gaddis, *Strategies of Containment: A Critical Appraisal of Postwar American National Security Policy* (Oxford University Press, $29.95 cloth, $10.95 paper).



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price paid for this "liberation" from methodological rigor. If Gaddis's book is on its first level an account of our postwar policy, it is on a second an interpretation of the causes of success and failure in that policy and, on yet a third level, a prescription for effective strategic method. One weakness of Gaddis's book is that his causal explanations are dual and divergent; a more serious one is the inadequacy of his conception of strategic method itself.

TWO LOGICAL limits define the approaches one might take to America's postwar foreign policy. The first emphasizes its unity, and sees differences between periods as of secondary importance; the second focuses on diversity (with each change of administration, for example) and finds emphasis on continuity unpersuasive. Gaddis adopts neither position but draws from both: within the unity of containment he finds important and recurrent variations. These diversities are not, however, pluralistic ones, but dualistic, and they are triggered largely by domestic forces. Much of the originality (and weakness) of Gaddis's analysis stems from his classification of strategies into "symmetrical" and "asymmetrical" categories, the saliency he assigns alternations between the two, and his assumptions about the forces which drive this alternation.

In light of the central role these concepts play in his analysis, it is troubling that the only sustained discussion Gaddis gives of them is in brief passages at the book's end. We are told that

> Symmetry offers protection against incremental threats; against the danger that peripheral challenges to the balance of power may become major ones. It makes available multiple levels of response, affording policy-makers choices wider than those of escalation or humiliation.

Symmetry, however, allows adversaries to "select the nature and location of competition" and this requires virtually unlimited resources for the "nation on the defensive." The United States has never been able to "generate the means necessary to support symmetrical containment over an indefinite period of time." When it tried to, this led to disastrous outcomes in the wars in Korea and Vietnam.

Asymmetrical containment, by contrast, derives from an awareness of limited resources, "and stresses the need to pick and choose one's response." It emphasizes a "variety of means" and the need

> to act in circumstances, at times, and in ways calculated to apply one's own strengths against adversary weaknesses. It retains, thereby, the initiative, but at the price of yielding positions not easily defended, or of expanding the confrontation to exploit positions that can be.

Asymmetry requires an ability to make rational distinctions between "peripheral and vital interests, tolerable and intolerable threats, feasible and unfeasible responses" and to withstand "psychological insecurities."

In his conclusion Gaddis seems to judge these strategies evenhandedly, and states that both "versions of containment have their limitations." An asymmetrical strategy "risks escalation to achieve economy," while a symmetrical one "sacrifices economy to avoid escalation." Despite these pretenses, however, the rest of Gaddis's narrative speaks so loudly one can scarcely hear what he says at its close. His book is, simultaneously, a celebration of the merit of asymmetrical strategies (and of the "realist" tradition from which they derive) and a condemnation of the flaws intrinsic to symmetrical ones.

We have noted that Gaddis discerns a recurrent alternation between the two. In the Truman administration, Kennan's asymmetrical strategy gives way to the symmetrical strategy of NSC-68. This is followed by Eisenhower's asymmetrical "New Look" which, in turn, is succeeded by Kennedy's symmetrical strategy of flexible response. This, in its turn, is supplanted by Nixon's symmetrical strategy of detente.

Gaddis's preference for asymmetry is made clear in his admiration for its first proponent, Kennan:



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there was already present in his writing and thinking a depth of strategic vision—that knack for seeing relationships between objective capabilities, aspirations and interests, long-term and short-term priorities—rarely found in harried bureaucrats.

Eisenhower's approach also receives strong praise as

> coherent . . . careful, for the most part, in its relation of ends to means, and, on the whole, more consistent with than detrimental to the national interest. It is a modest claim, but nonetheless a more favorable one than one can reasonably make about either the strategy that preceded, or the one that followed, the "New Look."

(One notes that both the preceding and succeeding strategies were symmetrical ones.) It hardly comes as a surprise to find that Gaddis credits the Nixon-Kissinger strategy with moving the United States from

> self-destructive entanglement in an interminable war to emergence as the pivot in the triangular balance of power that, for the most part, shaped the course of world affairs at that time. Rarely has a nation executed a more impressive or more rapid shift from defeat to dominance.

Heroes imply villains. These are, in the first instance, the authors of NSC-68, which Gaddis condemns as a "deeply flawed document, in the sense that the measures it recommended undercut the goals it was trying to achieve." In the second instance they are the authors of Kennedy's strategy, which Gaddis sees as "reminiscent of NSC-68 in its commitment to flexible but appropriate response regardless of cost," but with an even vaguer grasp of what one was trying to contain. Behind the villains' different masks is but a single face. For Gaddis reminds us that the lines of thought of NSC-68 left a heavy mark on Kennedy's policies, not least because "several of the key architects of NSC-68—notably Dean Acheson, Dean Rusk, and Paul Nitze—were influential in the councils of the Kennedy Administration."

Gaddis sees the quality of policy outcomes as intimately related to the validity of the strategic method decision-makers bring to bear. Proponents of asymmetrical strategies grasp the correct method, while advocates of symmetry lack this grasp. It is in their shared sense of strategy and their shared commitment to the "realist" tradition that the key to the achievements of Kennan and Kissinger is to be found. For both insisted on the "importance of establishing coherent relationships between ends and means" and both "understood the existence of a strategic 'logic' transcending time and circumstance." NSC-68, by contrast, showed nothing less than "a failure of strategic perception: an inability to relate short-term to long-term considerations, to coordinate actions with interests." And in Vietnam, where there was no orderly analysis of interests, threats, and means, one had, in consequence, "not so much bad strategy as no strategy at all."

Sound method, however, is not sufficient, by itself, to shape strategy, for each of the shifts between symmetry and asymmetry "grew out of a reassessment of the resources at hand." "The perception of means available appears to be the single most decisive determinant of national strategy; it, too, tends to lock administrations into either symmetrical or asymmetrical response." Fiscal liberals have a faith in expandable means and are inclined toward symmetry; fiscal conservatives see means as less expandable and are inclined toward asymmetry. Gaddis concludes that, "To a remarkable degree, containment has been the product, not so much of what the Russians have done, or of what has happened elsewhere in the world, but of internal forces operating within the United States." Although Gaddis nowhere examines the relation between these two very different factors, he seems to feel that strategic understanding is insufficient, given plentitude of means, to counter the tendencies in America that move us toward symmetry. Only when limitation of means works in tandem with clarity of insight can our nation find its proper way.

Gaddis stresses the importance of "strategic logic" throughout his book but, by its end,



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this collapses in face of the "tyranny of means"—itself conceived mainly in economic terms. The architect's roof is far too small for his building. Other ironies abound. A study dedicated to the elucidation of strategy—a domain that draws its justification from the complexity of interaction among states—assigns no independent impact to this "vast external realm." And the commonsense notion that strategy has some relation to the way a state can marshall power to serve its purposes finds in limitations of power the hidden key to effective policy. Beyond that, Gaddis does not weigh the enormous implications of the fact that his two causal factors exist on quite different levels: the one that of policy conception, the other that of policy implementation.

IN HIS EVALUATION of America's policies, Gaddis frequently moves from the quality of strategic analysis to the quality of policy outcome. Even assuming the existence of a "strategic logic transcending time and circumstance" (itself a highly questionable proposition), it is never possible to move directly from the character of that "logic" to that of the policies derivative from it, much less to the quality of policy outcomes. One may pursue a faultless strategic logic and yet meet defeat, or follow a flawed strategy and emerge victorious. "Strategic logic," as it becomes formulated policy, and formulated policy as it becomes implemented policy, are always transformed by interaction with internal and external constraints. Master strategists have ever been sensitive to the weight of necessity and the play of chance.

Strategy embraces, at a minimum, three levels of reality: strategic doctrine, policy implementation, policy outcome. For a comparative evaluation of strategies to be valid, one must make clear the level at which it is undertaken, and be consistent in observance of that level. One cannot cross levels—i.e. contrast the doctrine of strategy A with the outcome of strategy B—without invalidating the comparison. A comparison of doctrine with outcome is automatically prejudiced in the former's favor since the quality of intention is, by its nature, less flawed than that of outcome, debased through its interaction with circumstance.

A vivid illustration of Gaddis's crossing of levels is his evaluation of Truman's policies in the Korean war. He implies that favorable results might have followed from sound method, and contrasts these with the harsh outcomes actual policy brought:

> Despite the fact that the administration had resolved not to let Korea become the occasion for getting bogged down in a peripheral war with a secondary adversary, this was precisely what happened. And it happened, one suspects, because of the extent to which the premises of NSC-68 had come to overshadow, and modify, the original strategy of containment.

This remarkable judgment is rendered although NSC-68 had proved a far more accurate guide to Soviet action than had Kennan's containment (on proxy war, on the importance of "peripheral" areas, on our military deficiencies).

Gaddis nowhere explains how "the original strategy of containment" could have saved us from these dilemmas. Through denial that the protection of South Korea against Soviet-backed aggression was important to our interest? Or, if its importance were affirmed, through our inability to block aggression due to the deficiency of our capabilities? It is true that we would not have become "bogged down" in Korea if we had been driven out of it. But what would the implications of this have been for our interest in the global balance? Gaddis also crosses from one level to another in his agreement with Kennan's discounting of concerns that Mao's victory or the loss of our atomic monopoly would have dangerous implications for the global balance. He feels the following years proved "Kennan right in both of these calculations." What he fails to say is that Kennan might never have been "proven right" had not policies very different from his own been followed.

Clausewitz taught that strategy, because of the indeterminacy of the interactions with



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which it must deal, cannot enjoy the same basis in theory as does tactics. Raymond Aron has shown that, in consequence, strategic theory has "long been limited to the enumeration of a few principles which are little more than vague formulas."[2] Such vague rules, Aron adds, do not make possible the determination of the best strategy in a concrete situation, in part because they are contradictory. Further, since strategic decisions "are profoundly influenced by the total situation" they must take into account "the unique elements resulting from a combination of factors." Far from sharing Gaddis's faith in a "strategic logic transcending time and circumstance," Aron insists it is impossible to give policy content to the principles of strategy unless they are related to the multiple determinants of "time and circumstance." In his concern to bring Clausewitz's insights to life for the modern world, Gaddis advocates a method at odds with our era's foremost Clausewitzian.

THE KEY to Gaddis's concept of strategic method is modestly tucked away in a footnote, where he stresses the need to put four questions to each strategy:

> (1) What conception did the administration in question have of American interests in the world? (2) How did it perceive threats to those interests? (3) What responses did it choose to make, in the light of those interests and threats? (4) How did it seek to justify those responses?

Asymmetrical strategists are effective because they move, with logical order, through these four steps, i.e. they start with "an independently established concept of irreducible interests," assess the bearing of threats on these, and prudently marshall resources to preserve these interests against those threats. Symmetrical strategists, lacking this insight, are unable to arrive at "an independently established concept of irreducible interests." This failure leads to another: the definition of interests in terms of threats. They thereby allow the foe to determine their own interests. Once this happens, it is no longer possible to establish a rational relation between ends and means. Error compounds error; our frustration in Korea and failure in Vietnam were the bitter harvest of flawed method. In the Truman administration there was "very much a sense of direction without destination—of marching forthrightly into unknown areas, without any clear sense of what the ultimate objective was, how long it would take to achieve it, or what it would cost." And Gaddis finds it ironic that Kennedy and Johnson, who prided themselves on skill in relating means to ends, failed completely in this effort.

The assumption that one can establish a concrete definition of interests independent of threats, however, exaggerates both the logical and the historical separability of the two concepts. From the origin of the states system the concepts of autonomy (in the elemental sense of self-government) and hegemony (in the elemental sense of government by the leader) have stood in opposition to one another. The affirmation of autonomy logically implies the rejection of hegemony. As a condition of participation in the system, states have an "irreducible interest" in the preservation of autonomy and the prevention of hegemony. This logical interdependence of interest and threat has been a constant feature of modern international history, as seen in the development of sovereignty, international law, and the balance of power.

There are two situations in which a state's definition of its interest entails an explicit definition of the threat. The first ("idealized particularism") is where the state disclaims any interest beyond preservation of its own independence; only direct challenges to that autonomy are defined as threats. In the second ("idealized universalism") the state's interest is assumed to be the preservation of independence for all other states. In both cases the concept of interest implies an explicit concept of threat, in the one through

[2]Raymond Aron, *Peace and War: A Theory of International Relations* (Krieger, $46.50 cloth).



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comprehensive exclusion, in the other through comprehensive inclusion. The course of Swiss policy and the formal commitments of the League of Nations Covenant show both to be more than imaginary formulations. The singularity of the Swiss experience, and the abandonment of League obligations, suggest neither sets general standards.

Strategy must be set in the indeterminate realm between these extremes. The most important concept by which statesmen have sought guidance in this intermediate domain is the balance of power. The balance teaches that, while the security of one's state is not dependent on that of all states everywhere, it is linked to the protection of more than one's own autonomy. It is definitely related to the security of some states somewhere. No deduction from any "strategic logic" can tell us precisely what states where or when. Such judgments are, pre-eminently, historical. And they cannot possibly be made wisely if divorced from an assessment of threats.

The determination of "what states where and when" is a historical, not a deductive, undertaking. Assessment of changes in the international system requires rigorous analysis of vast and specific data. The capabilities and intentions of states constitute the dual coordinates of the international system. The "makers of modern strategy" were those who most clearly grasped the implications of changes in these coordinates. When multiple changes in both reinforce one another synergistically—as was the case in both world wars and as continues to be true of the cold war—the fashioning of effective strategy is exceptionally difficult. Under such circumstances the perennial foes of strategic creativity—complacency and rigidity—easily become crippling impediments.

Since judgments of "what states where and when" cannot be deduced from a strategic logic "transcending time and circumstance," divergence in assessment of such matters cannot be taken as demonstration of faulty strategic analysis. Nor can judgments of "how"—i.e., which combination of means, and in what proportion, are most likely to produce a desired outcome—be derived from such a logic. Yet Gaddis repeatedly takes legitimate divergences of "what" and "how" as demonstrations of the presence or absence of such understanding. A critical instance is his caustic attack on NSC-68, which, we shall see, in its assessment of both the "what" and the "how" showed a more profound grasp of strategy than the approach of Gaddis to either.

GADDIS bases his answer to "what" on Kennan's contention that there are "only five centers of industrial and military power in the world which are important to us from the standpoint of national security"—the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Central Europe, the Soviet Union, and Japan. For it was only in these areas that one could find the "requisite conditions" which would enable people to mount the amphibious power that could threaten our security. Only one of the five was now in hostile hands and our primary interest was to see that no other fell under such control.

A very different assessment was possible: that preservation of the independence of these "primary centers" was dependent on preservation of areas beyond them. The security of the European centers could not, for example, be discretely demarcated from that of the Mediterranean region. The latter's independence was, in turn, related to the preservation of Greece and Turkey. Nor could Japanese security be neatly divorced from that of Korea—the legendary dagger pointed at the heart of Japan. Beyond this, with the destruction of a self-contained Eurasian balance, the global balance could not be maintained unless the United States preserved ties with the remnants of that former balance. Finally, since credible nuclear deterrence was essential to the global balance, failure to uphold commitments in secondary theaters was hardly irrelevant to maintenance of them in primary ones. The fact that America's interests cannot be confined to Kennan's primary areas does not make them coextensive with the entire globe, of course. The problem is to determine precisely what areas



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must be defended to preserve the balance and one's own security. As NSC-68 understood, this determination cannot be made in the absence of a penetrating assessment of quite specific threats.

Gaddis equates the rejection by NSC-68 of Kennan's "strongpoint defense" with advocacy of a "perimeter defense, with all points along the perimeter considered of equal importance." As noted, he traces this divergence to a "failure of strategic perception" in NSC-68. The divergence, in truth, turned on assessment of complex historical events. NSC-68 sought to distill insights from America's struggles with the coming, course, and consequences of World War II. Concern that indifference to lesser balances could be followed rapidly by challenges to central ones was hammered home by the terrible swiftness of this sequence in World War II. In light of the rapidity with which the balance had collapsed in World War II (and the end of World War I), Kennan's calm confidence in the barriers "world realities" posed to "ambitious schemes of world domination" bespoke quixotic faith, not strategic grasp. The reassessment undertaken in NSC-68 stemmed from awareness that the balance of autonomy against hegemony was extremely precarious, and that previous American policies had failed effectively to maintain it. For despite major efforts (which Kennan had opposed) to strengthen the Western position, the Soviet projection of power continued.

ON THE QUESTION of "how," Gaddis also takes Kennan's arguments and makes them his own: "one of the strongest criticisms that can be made of the Truman administration's conduct of foreign and national security policy is that it failed to maintain the proper subordination of means to ends. In its determined effort to restore Western economic and military strength, it lost sight of the objective that strength was supposed to serve: ending the Cold War." Gaddis's controlling assumption is that a negotiated end of the cold war was not only desirable, but also possible, and in that period itself. He judges the effectiveness of strategies by the progress they made toward this end. The skepticism in NSC-68 that such a result could be achieved until situations of strength had been established is, for Gaddis, the clearest evidence of its deficient strategic "logic."

As we have noted, however, strategic "logic" dictates no specific "how." The greatest strategists have never been able to prescribe the precise mix between negotiation and other factors in the termination of conflicts, nor the exact time at which this mix should be brought to bear. When great conflicts have moved toward settlement this has been a result of many factors, with negotiation rarely the most significant.

At the foundation of the traditional international system lay a commitment to the preservation of a pluralistic order among autonomous states. Negotiation was an indispensable means through which the frictions that always attended that system could be lessened, and its potentialities for accord strengthened. Gaddis's faith in the prospect of a negotiated settlement between East and West, and Kennan's hope that agreement could be reached on the withdrawal of occupation forces from Europe, assumed both sides shared an interest in the restoration of a pluralist system to Europe. These outside forces had been introduced in the course of the abnormalities of a world war and the unsettled political conditions in its wake. Their withdrawal would have been in accord with the established precedents of the states system (after the Napoleonic wars, for instance). The actual prospect of such a settlement could, however, only be determined empirically, and much evidence pointed in the opposite direction.

As an instance, Stalin had made armistice accords (traditionally confined to strictly military provisions) instruments to transform unilaterally the political status of the nations of Eastern Europe. He had also given a radical twist to occupation policy. The occupation of a defeated state has traditionally been seen as a temporary aberration until certain conditions could be met and until



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autonomy, taken as a state's normal estate, could be restored. While America's occupation policies in Germany and Japan were in accord with this tradition, Soviet occupation policies in Eastern Europe made clear a determination to consolidate hegemony there. And nothing in any of Stalin's major pronouncements gave any indication he saw restoration of a "pluralist" system in Europe as possible or desirable.

Stalin was true to the Leninist tradition which saw the states system as the residue of a decadent order to be supplanted by a radically different organization of international reality. Rejecting the goals of the traditional system, Lenin assigned a very different role to the instruments used to uphold it. While diplomacy might under some circumstances be employed in a rather traditional fashion, under others it became an instrument to accelerate the revolutionary transformation of the old order. Joseph Alsop caught the revolutionary twist when he said the Soviets wage diplomacy as a process of erosion. And James Reston caught it when he wrote (in *Harper's*, in August 1947):

> the vital thing is that while this incredibly tedious process is working . . . the more effective political techniques of the Soviet Union are changing the history of the world with incredible speed. . . . By organizing the shop stewards in the labor unions in Germany; by controlling the supply of newsprint and food in Europe and doling it out to the weak and faithful; by organizing and financing the Communist parties and destroying the center parties on the continent; and by appealing to the dreams of hungry men, the Soviet Union has created a political technique that can take over a country in little more time than it takes to translate one of Mr. Gromyko's speeches.

The view of NSC-68 toward negotiated settlements was in accord with the concerns of Alsop and Reston. While it saw diplomacy as an aid in building strength, the prospect of any real settlement was far in the future. Gaddis warns that this approach involved an effort to create "situations of strength" that "left little room for efforts to alter the Soviet concept of international relations through positive as well as negative reinforcement." Indeed, he equates the position of NSC-68 with the demand that "future negotiations could take place only on the basis of Soviet capitulations." These "rigid prerequisites" for negotiations were particularly untimely since they made it impossible to explore indications that Stalin was making a shift from the doctrine of "inevitable conflict" to "peaceful coexistence." When Gaddis says "there appeared to be little to negotiate about," he sees this as due not so much to Soviet recalcitrance as to American rigidity. In truth, however, what NSC-68 was calling for was not "capitulation" by the Soviet Union but rather its respect for the elemental practices developed to safeguard the independence of states and its abandonment of those meant to destroy that independence.

A SECOND divergence over "how" turns on the role of military power. Gaddis finds additional assurance of the soundness of Kennan's method in the latter's repeated insistence that the Soviet challenge is primarily political, not military. This proposition, however, can be given two very different meanings. If taken to mean the Soviets don't think of power in narrowly military terms, but seek to integrate force with other factors, it is accurate. But if it means one should focus on the nonviolent means of Soviet policy and discount the military ones, it is belied by seven decades of Soviet history. Unfortunately, Kennan seemed far more inclined to the second interpretation than the first, as in his opposition to the formation of Nato because "the Europeans had mistaken what was essentially a political threat for a military one."

A more specific difference was that Kennan discounted the prospect the Soviets would risk war, while NSC-68 (with an eye to America's fading nuclear advantage) felt there was "no justification in Soviet theory or practice for predicting that, should the Kremlin become convinced that it could cause our downfall by one conclusive blow, it would



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not seek that solution." Further, NSC-68 (again with a clear eye to the World War II experience) felt that a failure to respond to local aggression could lead to "a descending spiral of too little and too late" that would confront us with "ever narrower and more desperate alternatives."

This concern was related to the awareness in NSC-68 of the political consequences of a continued (and perhaps widening) military asymmetry favorable to the Soviets. The fear was that the Soviet Union, by a military buildup far beyond that needed for defense, could deter "the victims of its aggression from taking any action in opposition to its tactics which would risk war." The Kremlin would be in a position "to back up infiltration with intimidation." A particular worry was that Soviet military power would accelerate movement by our allies toward the "logic of accommodation" (which ever seeks the reduction of defense of liberty to irrationality) through tilting domestic political balances in the direction of "neutrality."

Gaddis's contention that NSC-68 narrowly stressed military means while Kennan also emphasized political, economic, and psychological ones is belied by the above considerations, as well as by his own "startled" recognition that NSC-68 understood the sense in which world order depended on perceptions, as well as on "actual" power. The contention of NSC-68 was not that economic or political or diplomatic means were not necessary, but that they were never sufficient. However high the cards one held in these suits, the Soviets played a game in which clubs were trumps.

In our relations with the Soviet Union there has been a persistent tension between those who advocate negotiations and those who stress power. At the heart of the divergence between Gaddis and NSC-68 is that Gaddis came to see these efforts as contradictory while the latter continued to see them as complementary. Gaddis follows Kennan in denunciation of Truman's determination to establish "situations of strength" on the grounds that this would freeze the lines of division in Europe. Truman's concern was that failure to build such strength would lead to a further consolidation of Soviet hegemony on the eastern side of that line and deterioration of autonomy on its western side.

NSC-68 saw real risks that the quest for "settlement," under the handicaps America then faced (which might become more pronounced in the near future), might give diplomatic legitimacy to the perpetuation of imbalance. Such "legitimacy" would become the point of departure in future Soviet efforts to shift the advantage more decisively in their favor. The persistent Soviet proclamation of the incompatibility of negotiation with any effort on our part to redress the balance gave substance to these concerns. The expectation by Gaddis that diplomacy could play a traditional role under these radically changed conditions is not unlike one who adorns his car's hood with a bridle because the horse-drawn carriage was a predecessor to the horseless one.

Beyond the divergence between Gaddis/Kennan and NSC-68 on "what" and "how" lay a more fundamental divergence over the freedom open to America under the constraints she faced. Gaddis and Kennan saw the choice as that between something bad and something better; NSC-68 as that between something bad and something worse. NSC-68 feared that, in the name of moving through negotiation toward a more traditional Europe, our ability to preserve the present balance would be further eroded, and the outcome would be a further advance in Soviet power.

The gravest weakness of Gaddis's work is his elevation of legitimate divergences in assessment of complex data into ultimate distinctions between sound and flawed "strategic logic." This weakness is compounded as one becomes aware that the empirical assessments of the strategies whose method he condemns are often more accurate than those of the strategists he praises.

The assumptions of Gaddis, and Kennan, bring to mind those of the British Conservatives of the 1930s: that Britain's



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interests could be precisely delimited; that disturbances in far away corners of Eastern Europe had no significant bearing on them; that the destructiveness of modern weapons made their use highly unlikely in any war; that Herr Hitler was, at heart, a traditional statesman with whom a general settlement could be negotiated that would redress legitimate grievances. Little Red Riding Hood was halfway down the wolf's throat before she realized he wasn't Grandma.

What these traditionalists fail to grasp is that the earthquake of the first World War swallowed forever the "classical balance of power" and the doctrine of "realism" which gave articulation to it. That war thrust from the depths to the very center of our landscape the phenomenon of totalitarian foreign policy, in all its monstrous novelty. It is a three-dimensional challenge, which the "realist's" customary and comfortable world of the diplomat and the soldier collapses to but one dimension. Over it towers the whole new dimension of the strategy of nuclear intimidation, disguised by the fig leaf of arms control to confirm its virtue and deny its meaning. Below it grinds a vast new armory of revolutionary weapons. These, first deployed to cripple the will to freedom within one's own borders, are then projected to break those beyond them: the bribe, the lie, the police, the terror.

The attempt to counter the multi-dimensional threat of totalitarian foreign policy with the one-dimensional perspective of the traditionalist is not unlike the plight of a tactician who engages a strategist. The former, however brilliant, will be at a disadvantage in relation to the latter, however mediocre. For whatever the successes the tactician may achieve in his restricted terrain, they will be trumped by those of the strategist in his larger one. To forge a strategy to counter totalitarian imperialism it is necessary to go far beyond Clausewitz's celebrated dictum that "War is a continuation of political relations by other means." It is also necessary to understand that diplomacy is a continuation of political relations by other means, as are the nuclear and revolutionary dimensions of policy.

The policy world of George Kennan was a singularly disjointed one—geographically, functionally, historically. As Paul Seabury and Patrick Glynn have noted, "Far from being anchored to a coherent strategic vision, Kennan's approach to foreign policy might be described as anti-strategic."[3] NSC-68, by contrast, was a brilliant effort to integrate the multiple dimensions of America's power to one another. We find a final irony in the fact that Gaddis, in a work that pays homage to Clausewitz and is preoccupied with the evaluation of strategy, should take as his standard of judgment an approach that looks inward and backward, and dismiss as misguided one that looks outward and forward.

[3]Paul Seabury and Patrick Glynn, "Kennan: The Historian as Fatalist," *The National Interest*, Winter 1985/6.



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# Two Bus Lines to Bethlehem

Daniel Pipes

ALTHOUGH MORE than nineteen years have passed since Jerusalem was reunited in the 1967 war, the city remains divided. The international border, the high walls, and the armed forces have left, but less has changed than one might expect. Arabs live in East Jerusalem, Jews live in West Jerusalem, and they do not often mix. They live apart, work apart, and play apart.

This was brought home to me not long ago, when I needed to go from East to West Jerusalem. A taxi with Arabic script on the door of the car stopped; the driver was an Arab. He listened to my destination, a well-known restaurant in the center of Jewish Jerusalem, and looked at me blankly. I, the foreigner, explained to him in Arabic where it was and how he should get there. The driver tried to follow my directions but quickly got lost. We ended up in the wrong part of town—and I was an hour late for dinner. That an Arab taxi driver can be ignorant of Jewish Jerusalem, well over half the small city he lives in (population: 415,000), makes vivid the unlimited separateness of the two communities in Israel.

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The same pattern of separation holds—though to a lesser degree—in the rest of Israel. Arabs live in lower Nazareth, Jews in upper Nazareth. Arabs live in Jaffa and Jews in Tel Aviv. The two peoples almost never share a block of houses, much less the same building. In towns where they do sometimes live side-by-side, such as Haifa, Ramla, and Lod, insulation between Jews and Arabs is correspondingly strong. Jews who have moved into East Jerusalem have chosen a location physically isolated from the Arab population—the Jewish quarter of the Old City is virtually inaccessible from the Arab streets.

This pattern did not occur by accident. Since the inception of Zionism in the 1860s, Jewish-Arab segregation has been the rule, as Jewish settlers sought to minimize contact with Arabs, and Arabs preferred Jews to stay at a distance. From the first modern Jewish town of Rishon Letzion in 1882, Zionists almost never moved into existing Arab settlements but started from scratch in uninhabited areas. The establishment of Tel Aviv in 1909, Eilat in 1949, and Kiryat Arba in 1978 all fit this pattern. Similarly, small towns and villages tend to be populated almost entirely by Arabs or by Jews. Zionists made a point of purchasing wastelands and other uncultivated areas from the Arabs; thus, Jewish villages and fields throughout Israel are located



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on the inhospitable terrain left vacant by the Arabs. The result is a quilt of separation all through the country.

Jewish settlements on the West Bank, which are unusually isolated from their Arab neighbors, epitomize the pattern. On this hill live Arabs, on that one Jews. Al-Azariya and Maale Adumim, for example, towns of about 10,000 inhabitants each, are set cheek-by-jowl on the West Bank outside Jerusalem. The former is entirely Arab, the latter wholly Jewish. The two have a bare minimum of contact; the Jewish town is located on a previously unused hill, and a swath of no-man's-land divides the two peoples' fields. Maale Adumim has even built roads that avoid the Arab areas in connecting the town to Israel proper. In effect, the West Bank has Arab roads and Jewish roads.

Occasional efforts to break these divisions meet strong resistance on both sides. Trouble invariably follows, whether Arabs try to improve their conditions by moving to the Jewish section of Nazareth, or whether Jews attempt to re-establish their historic presence in Hebron. Not surprisingly, experiments in integrated living win little favor among either Arabs or Jews. The most prominent effort to bring the two communities together is Neveh Shalom, founded in 1978 outside of Jerusalem. Despite considerable aid from abroad, it has only sixty residents, including seven Jewish families and six Arab families.

Separation in Israel extends to all aspects of life. Jews and Arabs not only live apart; they also worship, work, socialize, and play separately. The same American movie might show simultaneously in two theaters in Jerusalem, playing to a wholly Arab audience in one and to an all-Jewish audience in the other. Arabs tend to vote for Arab politicians, Jews for Jewish ones. This pattern is learned young; with the lone exception of Neveh Shalom, nowhere in Israel do Arab and Jewish children sit in the same classroom.

The Arabic-language telephone directory for Jerusalem highlights another aspect of this segregation. Israel's telephone company does not publish a directory in Arabic, so Arab entrepreneurs have published their own directory for Jerusalem. They omitted all Jewish names and published only Arab names. The assumption behind the omission—that Arabs do not call Jews—implies a great deal about daily life.

Bus lines are equally revealing. Arabs travel on buses owned and driven by fellow Arabs; Jews use buses owned and staffed by Jews. The two people travel apart whenever possible, even when their routes overlap. Two separate companies, for example, serve the route between Jerusalem and Bethlehem; the one Arabs patronize leaves from a station in East Jerusalem; Jews patronize one that leaves from West Jerusalem. An Arab encounters no difficulties traveling on the Jewish line, nor a Jew on the Arab line, but the two peoples prefer to avoid contact with each other.

As these many examples suggest, the paths of Arabs and Jews cross only when a specific purpose takes one of them to the alien side of the city. Arabs do not routinely spend time in the Jewish parts of cities; they go to West Jerusalem or to Tel Aviv for work. Similarly, Jews stay away from the Arab sector; they pass through East Jerusalem mainly on their way to pray at the Western Wall; they go to Jaffa for the nightlife in the recently refurbished (and Jewish-owned) Old City. When Arab and Jew do encounter each other, they usually pass wordlessly. Each acts as though the other were invisible or nonexistent. Physically, they must share a street; mentally, each lives in his own world.

Peoples everywhere associate with their own sort and keep away from those who differ, but the segregation that exists in Israel is of a different magnitude from any to be found in the Western world. Paris has its *quartiers* and Chicago has its neighborhoods, to be sure, but these divisions are only partial. Israel's two peoples keep further apart than do comparable communities in the West, where a whole range of pressures—suburban life, public schools, business activities, amusements, transportation—work to counter parochial habits.



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The pattern of separation is even greater than in divided cities of the West. A 1984 study by the Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies explains:

> The inter-relationships between the Jewish and Arab sectors of Jerusalem after 1967 reveal a pattern of separation that is much more far-reaching and unusual than in other comparable situations. The separation between the Jewish and Arab sectors and populations was found to be much more extreme than in other "mixed cities" such as Belfast, Nicosia, Montreal, and Brussels.
>
> Even in cities in which different national identities are accompanied by varying degrees of political conflict, the degree of separation, as defined by the indicators [used in the study] and by the quality of functional relations, is nowhere as great as in united Jerusalem. In all the relevant comparisons, residential segregation is nowhere as total, and not every bus and taxicab have sectoral identities, not even in cities where the political conflict expresses itself in day to day life in much more extreme fashion than that which characterizes co-existence in Jerusalem since the reunification.

The study also notes the absence of "joint voluntary activities, neighborly relations, or intermarriage" in Jerusalem.

Translated from the language of social science, this report states that while the Jews and Arabs of Jerusalem enjoy more peaceful co-existence than the inhabitants of other cities torn by strife, they avoid each other more systematically.

WHY SO overwhelming a pattern of separation? In part, the reason has to do with the mutual mistrust and fear between the two peoples of Israel. Arab hostility has fueled the extremist politics of the PLO and caused innumerable terrorist incidents. Feelings on the Jewish side are moving in the same direction. According to a poll released in January 1986, 58 percent of Jewish Israelis believe it is "impossible to trust most Arabs." Meir Kahane may express what is on many Israelis' minds when he argues that fraternization leads to mixed marriages.

More important than mutual distaste, however, is a tradition of segregation that has long prevailed in the Muslim world. However much living patterns in Israel differ from those of the West, they closely resemble the norm throughout the Middle East. Lebanon's many communities live apart, retaining their own way of life and their own leaders. As in Israel, they interact only to the extent they must. Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Syrian Orthodox, Armenians, Sunnis, Shi'ites, and Druze have their own districts, schools, social life, and businesses. Ethnic and religious divisions led to the civil war that began in 1975 and still continues.

In Egypt, Christians inhabit their own villages in upper Egypt and their own sections of Cairo. Communal relations are also extremely fractured in Syria and Iraq. Similar divisions exist in Morocco, Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan. As far away as Malaysia and Indonesia, the same rules govern relations between the Chinese minorities and the Muslim majorities.

In Israel, not only have Arabs and Jews been segregated for centuries—as shown by the quarters of the Old City in Jerusalem—but this same pattern extends to the various non-Jewish communities. Some towns, such as Bethlehem, are predominantly Christian; others, such as Nablus, are mostly Muslim. Jerusalem has Christian Arab and Armenian sectors. The Druze inhabit their own villages, as do other small minorities, such as the Circassians.

In all these cases, the pattern of segregation derives from a common source—the precepts of Islam. In Islamic doctrine, Jews, Christians, and adherents of certain other religions have a special status. While inferior to Muslims, they have, nonetheless, a right to practice their faiths and live in countries controlled by Muslims. Even when Muslims rule a country, they must allow Jews and Christians the freedom to retain their religious identity. This precept has usually been followed.



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At the same time, Muslims are discouraged from associating closely with non-Muslims or from mixing socially with them. Practices differ from one region to another, but the general rule has been for non-Muslim communities to live apart from Muslims. In cities, the many religious communities typically inhabited separate quarters. (Scholars trace the Jewish ghetto of European cities to a North African prototype.) In the countryside, they usually lived in different villages. This pattern has become traditional in the Middle East and wherever Muslims have ruled, from West Africa to Southeast Asia. Even where Muslims no longer rule, as in Cyprus, Israel, or India, the pattern has assumed a life of its own, and the separation continues.

Historically, segregation has had many consequences. For one, living apart and maintaining their own distinct customs facilitated the survival of Jewish and Christian communities through nearly fourteen centuries of Muslim domination. Separation enabled the minorities to withstand the constant pressure exerted by the Muslim majority to convert.

For another, separation focused loyalty on the religious and ethnic community rather than on the state. To the despair of many Middle Eastern governments, communal allegiances even today usually remain stronger than bonds to the central governments. Communal loyalties lie behind the Lebanese civil war that began in 1975; they divide the body politic in Syria between the ruling Alawis and the resentful Sunni Muslims; being an Iraqi is less important than belonging to one of the ethnic blocs that split the country; and so forth.

Segregated living also has many implications for Jewish-Arab relations in Israel. On a very practical level, it facilitates terrorism by providing discrete targets. That each people sticks to its own bus line explains why terrorists so often choose to attack buses. The PLO hijacked an Israeli bus in March 1978, killing thirty-two Israelis and provoking a large-scale Israeli attack on the PLO in Lebanon, and in September 1984 it wounded seven Jews in a bus on the West Bank. On the other side, twenty-five Jews were arrested on terrorism charges in May 1984, accused of plotting to place bombs in a fleet of Arab buses. And in October 1984, a young Israeli soldier was arrested for blowing up a bus in central Jerusalem, killing three Arabs.

Separation renders unlikely the possibility of a true rapprochement between Arabs and Jews. The two peoples merely coexist. They are not getting to know each other, to respect each other, or to like one another. Any plan for the future of Israel that stipulates more than mutual toleration is therefore probably unrealistic. The notion of a binational state in which Arabs and Jews share power seems especially unworkable.

But separation reduces frictions and so holds out real advantages as well. Contact is so limited that many Arabs and Jews go about their daily affairs without ever dealing with each other. Cases of violence, theft, and vandalism occur much less between Arabs and Jews than within each community. The same goes for civil court cases, family fights, tensions between union and employer, and the myriad other problems of everyday life. In effect, the two peoples are already living peaceably side-by-side. The intractable disagreements between Arabs and Jews concern abstract questions of power. Problems that politicians must handle involve only the great issues of sovereignty and ultimate control, not mundane matters of daily existence.

Separation is a proven way of dealing with a historic challenge. Though not the solution we in the West would prefer, nor by any means an ideal solution, it does work. It offers an authentic, indigenous answer to a characteristic Middle Eastern problem: how two peoples can coexist at close quarters.



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# Partition & Apartheid

Steven Metz

BOTH THE SITUATION in South Africa and the debate concerning the proper American response have reached a point of sterile rigidity. In Pretoria, the dominant belief seems to be that if black revolution can be postponed long enough by token changes in what is called "petty apartheid," then demands for full political and economic participation will fade away. The results are political ossification and mounting violence. The prospect of a unitary democratic system based on the principle of one-man, one-vote, which is an essential non-negotiable objective for most blacks, remains anathema to the white population. Thus the veneer of apartheid is rearranged while its core is preserved, and the gruesome deadlock continues.

In the United States, debate has also reached an impasse. Our long-range objective, which is sometimes stated explicitly but more often implied, is also the development of a unitary, one-man, one-vote system. This idealist approach ignores the fact that no solution to the problems of South Africa can come about without the cooperation of the white community, and at the present time unitary democracy is considered preposterous by this group. At the same time the slow disintegration of Zimbabwean democracy erodes the hope that some combination of electoral equality and guarantees of minority rights might provide a transitional mechanism to full unitary democracy. One part of the Afrikaner ideology—that Americans do not comprehend the difficulty or impossibility of stable unitary democracy in heterogeneous Third World nations—appears accurate.

Because a unitary democratic system is *both* desirable and unrealistic, the debate over American policy has avoided the difficult question of realistic ends and has focused instead on means, especially the form and extent of anti-Pretoria sanctions. But debate over alternate means to an impossible objective is at best empty; any policy which results will be muddled. What is needed, then, is a sober assessment of attainable objectives. Given the unreality of a unitary political system in the charged, rigid, and divisive South African situation, the range of these objectives is not broad. Of them, both the most logical and the least discussed is partition of the country into separate white and black states. Among solutions which protect vital American interests in South Africa, this may be the best that can be hoped for, and thus should be actively promoted by the United States.

Some analysts of the South African situation who recognize the impossibility of a unitary political system espouse "consociational democracy" as a compromise solution. This concept was developed by Arend Lijphart, and is largely based on the example of the Netherlands. In consociational democracy, political competition exists *within* eth-

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nic, religious, or racial groups, but not between them. The overall distribution of political power is decided *a priori*, usually by population, while national policy is established by a "summit conference" of leaders selected by the various ethnic groups. The actual prerogatives of this summit are strictly limited to issues which concern all groups. The problem is that the Dutch example has only limited applicability to South Africa where the historic *leitmotif* of group relations has not been cooperation, but domination and exploitation. Consociationalism is based on a general acceptance of the status quo, which simply does not exist in South Africa. The Third World is rife with examples of failed consociational systems, prime among them Lebanon. In all likelihood Zimbabwe, the latest consociational experiment, will meet an equally ignoble end.

One aspect of consociationalism, however, already plays a major role in the South African situation: the separation of racial and ethnic groups, or, in the language of the Afrikaners, "apartheid." In order to preserve their separate white identity, the Pretoria government has pursued a policy since the early 1960s known as "grand apartheid." This consists of the physical division of the country into white areas and regions for each of the major black groups known as "bantustans" or "tribal homelands." The eventual goal is the creation of independent nations for each group, at which time all blacks would be considered citizens of their appropriate homeland and South Africa itself would be controlled by whites. (It has never been clear what would be done with South Africa's two smaller minorities—Asians and the people of mixed blood called Coloureds—under this scheme, since clearly neither of these has any sort of "ancestral homeland" to which they can return.) Although many blacks would still work in white areas, there is no international legal norm or precedent that requires alien workers to be granted full economic and political rights in their host nation, and thus, according to the architects of "grand apartheid," blacks in white South Africa could be legally and morally excluded from participation in the direction of the nation.

Despite opposition from the world community, the rest of Africa, and a majority of South African blacks, Pretoria has refused to abandon this plan. (There is support for the homelands program among blacks who would become the elites of the new nations, for example Gatsha Buthelezi of KwaZulu, who has recently become known as an opponent of Western economic sanctions against South Africa.) Several of the homelands were granted independence, beginning with Transkei in 1976, but none of these has been accorded recognition by any nation other than South Africa. To a great extent, then, "grand apartheid" has been stillborn. The real problem, though, is not the concept of partition, but the way in which it has developed under "grand apartheid." The designated homelands comprise only about 13 percent of the total land of South Africa, and even less of the important industrial and mining regions. Within modernized South Africa the homelands appear as enclaves of the Fourth World, with poverty and disease similar to the most underdeveloped nations of Africa. In addition, only one of the homelands, Qwaqwa, is composed of contiguous territory; all the rest are fragmented into as many as forty-eight major parcels divided by white areas. It is clear, then, that "grand apartheid" was never intended as a real and equitable partition of South Africa, but simply as a tactic in Pretoria's divide and rule approach to blacks. The *concept* of partition is therefore not discredited by "grand apartheid."

OPPONENTS OF partition in South Africa often point to two historical analogies, both of which have only limited applicability. One of these is the separation of British India. Because Hindu and Moslem India overlapped, partition resulted in uncounted deaths and tremendous property loss by those who happened to be caught on the wrong side of the partition line.



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South Africa too does not lend itself to cut and dried divisions, and the same sort of problems could result. What this argument does not consider are the likely consequences if India had *not* been divided. Given the degree of religious and ethnic enmity in India and the inevitable dislocations of decolonization, the violence that transpired may have been the best that could be expected. The later conflict between India and Pakistan provides ample evidence that the two religious groups were incapable of coexisting in a unitary democratic system. In South Africa, too, instability and violence would result from partition, at least until those who found themselves on the wrong side of the line moved. But a strong case can be made that violence is going to occur in South Africa regardless, and that a policy which minimizes it is the best that can be expected.

A more problematic analogy is that of Palestine. Unlike India, it is likely that the partition of Palestine exacerbated tension and violence. Yet at the same time the differences between the Palestinian and South African situations are deep. Because whites have been in South Africa since the seventeenth century, they are not seen as interlopers in the same sense that the Jews of Palestine were. Only the most radical fringe of black South Africa calls for the actual expulsion of the whites. In addition, the Jews of Palestine never dominated the Arabs in the way that white South Africans have dominated and exploited black South Africans. This means that while the Arabs of the Palestinian region saw partition as an erosion of their existing status, black South Africans would probably see the creation of a viable majority-ruled state or states as an improvement in their situation. The Palestinian example, then, does not show the infeasibility of partition of ethnic or racial groups in the Third World, while the examples of Lebanon, India, and several other states do provide evidence of its desirability.

The process of division in South Africa would invariably lead to injustices for both communities. But at the same time, it *would* avoid the worst case scenario of prolonged violence generating a revolutionary, pro-Soviet regime. Partition could lead to the creation of a rump white state which the U.S. could politically afford to support, while assuring that even if the black state or states became Soviet allies, the danger would be less than if South Africa as a whole took this path.

It can be argued that, considering the degree of opposition to partition, the United States does not have adequate influence to stimulate its adoption. What this does not take into account is that the limitations on American influence are in large part the result of the muddled and confused nature of our current policy. Because we have refused to choose between what each side sees as essential non-negotiable demands—for the blacks, majority rule, for the whites, separation—we have avoided fully alienating either, but at the same time have limited our ability to influence or control either. Partition is the only strategy that synthesizes these essential non-negotiable demands. Thus full, clear, and unequivocal U.S. advocacy of partition would augment our influence with both groups, and could tip the scales in favor of the more realistic South Africans of all races who recognize its tragic necessity.

Because both blacks and whites in South Africa are convinced that they will eventually gain their essential non-negotiable objective, both have tended to reject partition. For each it would make little sense to surrender part of the country when they feel that over the long run they will control or continue to control all of it. But as the two sides come to recognize the fact that so long as their struggle pits irreconcilable objectives the conflict is likely to be long and bloody, both may eventually arrive at a more realistic and limited assessment of what can be gained. At such a point—and it is likely to come soon—partition would appear viable. By strongly advocating this position now, the United States may have at least some control over the actual nature of the division. And by contributing to a speedy and equitable resolution of the



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racial conflict in South Africa, the U.S. will decrease both the likelihood of the radicalization process that accompanies long and vicious political struggles and mitigate the continuing torment of South Africans of all races.

## *Correspondence*

### China Future, China Past

The admirable analysis of China's current options by Professors Oksenberg and Lieberthal ["Forecasting China's Future," Fall 1986] raises a stimulating range of questions for the historian of late Qing and early modern China. If we take the Oksenberg-Lieberthal list of six major facets of current reform—opening to the outside world, less state control of the economy, shifts in agricultural organization, yielding of totalitarian to authoritarian rule, relaxation of cultural restraints, and reform of government structures—we find that very similar types of analysis could be made for three periods in China's recent past.

These periods would be the 1890s, the mid-teens (c. 1913–1917), and the mid-1930s. At all these times, leaders of the Chinese state endeavored to overcome central national weakness by a wide range of reforms in the economy and the shape of the government. In all three periods the role of foreign investment and foreign advisers was central. In all three periods, reforms turned out to be more expensive than envisaged, and led to unexpected areas of opposition. In all three, though major breakthroughs were made, large areas of the country remained unaffected, and development took place in a boom-and-bust atmosphere of overheated endeavor. In all three periods, the problem of the absence of adequately trained technical and managerial personnel was paramount.

If one pushed the parallels into the Oksenberg-Lieberthal list of probable scenarios for the fate of the Deng Xiaoping reforms, again one finds their list is highly useful in reflecting on the fates of reform attempts in our above-mentioned three periods. Briefly, one could state that the late Qing reforms in the 1890s, which spilled over into the first decade of the twentieth century, led to "systemic breakdown," caused by an overzealous attempt to push reforms faster than the country could handle. In the case of the 1913–1917 reform attempts, associated mainly with the regime of China's first de facto republican president, Yuan Shikai, one could point to a combination of "status quo" with "systemic breakdown," as the reforms largely stalled, and the leadership itself collapsed in the search for new symbols of power and prestige. In the case of the mid-1930s reforms of Chiang Kai-shek and his Guomindang (formerly romanized as Kuomintang, or KMT), a spirited but diffuse attempt at selective national reform resulted in the combination of "corrupt regime" followed by "systemic breakdown."

If we look for reasons why the Deng successors may have cause to be more hopeful than these three previous examples might suggest, it is because there is one major factor present in all three earlier cases that is now missing. That is the unrelenting hostility of the Japanese to the Chinese state and its modernization. In case study one, the Japanese destroyed China's "modern navy" in 1894 and 1895, and seized Taiwan. In case two, they wrecked the morale of the Yuan regime by their "21 Demands" for economic and political privileges in China. In case three, they destroyed Chiang Kai-shek's final chances for coupling economic reform with destruction of the Chinese Communist party by moving into Manchuria and North China



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in the early 1930s, and provoking full-scale war in 1937.

Today's Japan may be a formidable economic presence, as we well know. But it is not likely to interfere with hostile zeal as China's new leaders seek to consolidate their reforms, and that may be their salvation.

*Jonathan D. Spence*
*Yale University*

## Optimism

In "Forecasting China's Future," after analyzing support for and opposition to what they label the "Great Reform" now underway in China, Michel Oksenberg and Kenneth Lieberthal reach a fundamentally optimistic conclusion. In their view, there are theoretically five general paths of possible development in China in the period ahead. They rate two of them—a systemic breakdown and serious deterioration of the system resulting from corruption—as highly unlikely. The three others, which actually cover quite a wide range of outcomes, they regard as very possible—continuation of successful reform, the stalling of reform and crystalization of a new status quo, or abandonment of reform. However, they judge continuation of successful reform to be the most likely, in the long run. They are less sanguine, however, about the immediate post-Deng Xiaoping period and believe that the reforms in China could stall or even be abandoned for several years following Deng's disappearance from the scene, after which, they believe, the process of reform probably would be resumed.

The first comment I will make on their analysis, and their judgments, is that I believe they are basically sound; I agree that there are good reasons to be cautiously optimistic about the prospect for the continuation of successful reform in China. My main difference is that I am cautiously optimistic even about continued reform in the immediate post-Deng period, as well as in the long run.

At every step in the post-Mao reform process, China's reform leaders under Deng have encountered resistance and difficulties—and this doubtless will continue to be the case in the next five to ten years. As a result, the reform process has been, and probably will continue to be, wavelike, with periods of forward movement alternating with periods of consolidation and tactical retreat. I do not think this will change very much in the period immediately after Deng's death. In my judgment, the reform process, while continuing to have ups and downs, will probably be a continuous process for many years to come, without any major hiatus or reversal.

One reason for this judgment is that there clearly has been a steady broadening of support in China for the main directions of reform pushed by Deng and other reform leaders. Another is that there really are no viable alternative leaders (or programs) that are likely to be rallying points for the sizable groups that either actively oppose certain reforms or drag their feet in implementing them. I believe that the momentum pushing the reform process is strong and may get even stronger in the period ahead.

Inevitably, there are losers as well as winners as a result of the far-reaching changes China's reformers are introducing; but in my view, the winners clearly predominate, and this fact is propelling the reform process forward. Within China's leadership, moreover, Deng has engineered, in a very brief period, a remarkable generational change and has planned his succession with extraordinary care; almost certainly, the large majority of the new leaders who have recently emerged favor carrying China's reforms considerably further. Many of the youngest of the new leaders are pushing for greater changes than Deng and his immediate proteges favor. Virtually all of China's reformers—old and young—recognize, also, that, while the political and economic reforms introduced so far have been beneficial, to obtain the full benefits of economic reform it is imperative—at a minimum—to take several more very important and very difficult, steps—such as carrying out real price reform. There is an increasing recognition, furthermore, that eco-



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nomic reform must be paralleled by some further political reform (although there is no consensus on exactly what kind of political reform is desirable and feasible).

The strength of the momentum propelling the reform process forward has been very clear in 1986. After experiencing serious economic difficulties during 1985, as a result of reforms introduced in late 1984, China's leaders stated that 1986 would be a year of consolidation rather than forward movement, especially in regard to price reform but also more broadly. Despite this, a kind of "creeping price reform" has continued, and many new economic reform experiments have been initiated in 1986.

The possibility of any abandonment or reversal of the reforms, even for a limited period after Deng's disappearance, seems very small, therefore, unless China were to experience major disasters or setbacks as a result of current policies, which seems very unlikely in the foreseeable future. It is almost certain that the regime will continue to have serious difficulty in implementing some of the planned reforms and that, in the process, it could experience a partial loss of control over the economy; this happened in 1980 and 1985, and it certainly could happen again. However, the regime has demonstrated considerable skill in re-establishing control in such situations, which suggests that they probably will be able to prevent any temporary loss of control from derailing the reform process when similar situations arise.

Two points deserve special emphasis in any analysis of the prospects for a continuation of reform in China. One stems from the perceived failure of previous strategies of economic development, the other from the far-reaching impact of the Cultural Revolution. In the Maoist era, China tried and found wanting two development strategies—the Stalinist approach calling for a command economy, and a very different Maoist mobilizational approach. There are relatively few Chinese now who believe that a return to either of these is desirable or feasible—or who now see any very different strategy as a realistic alternative to current reform policies. The political breakdown of China during the Cultural Revolution created a "crisis of confidence" that opened the door to far-reaching change, and greatly weakened the influence of those opposed to change. For all of these reasons, no major shift of direction is likely, in my judgment—unless China experiences a major disaster. The key question, therefore, is not whether reform will continue but how rapid and extensive it will be.

Oksenberg and Lieberthal stop short of trying to describe what China will look like when the reform process has run its course. Their discussion nonetheless does suggest in general terms what the likely outcome will be—a somewhat liberated form of authoritarianism and an economy based on a new mix of planning and market forces. What is difficult to predict is exactly what the mix will be and when the situation will stabilize—that is, when some new systemic equilibrium will emerge. My guess is that this is at least a decade or two in the future, and I believe the reform process is likely to evolve continuously, in a wavelike fashion, until such a point is reached.

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*School of Advanced*
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*Johns Hopkins University*

## Sino-Soviet Stability

I am in broad agreement with the assessment of Chinese reforms and the general future of China as outlined by Messrs. Oksenberg and Lieberthal. I tend to be sanguine, though with proper caution, about the durability of Chinese reforms and I also concur that it is in America's interest for these reforms to succeed.

It is possible, of course, to view the Chinese reforms as a replay of Lenin's New Economic Policy. Then, as now, the communist leaders allowed a considerable amount of free production and free trade, especially in foodstuffs and other consumer goods, as a means of repairing a catastrophic situation



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that threatened either collapse or rebellion. As we know, six years later the NEP was abandoned and Soviet Russia began to build a totalitarian state with excesses of terror which had no historic precedent. Thus, skeptics who look on the Chinese reforms as a tactical move which will be abandoned in due time have historic evidence to support their argument.

The parallel between contemporary China and Russia of the 1920s falls down, however, because of at least one fundamental difference: in the USSR the NEP *preceded* collectivization and forced industrialization, whereas in China the economic reforms *followed* collectivization and forced industrialization. I find it very difficult to conceive how one billion Chinese peasants, having been liberated from the miseries of collective farms, could be herded back into them once again. In general, although what went on in China during the "Cultural Revolution" was not exactly Stalinism, it was so traumatic an experience that in my opinion it is no more likely to be repeated than Stalinism can be revived in Soviet Russia.

My one sharp disagreement with the authors concerns their unrealistic desire for a "stable" relationship between China and the Soviet Union. While no one in his right senses would desire the two countries to go to war, the tension which has existed between them for the past quarter of a century has not destabilized world politics, but, on the contrary, stabilized them. There are few things that Moscow desires more than "stability" in its relationship with Beijing. Assurance of a safe Asian front would greatly diminish the pressures on Soviet military resources and free Moscow to launch aggressive adventures in other parts of the world, especially the Middle East. A "stable" Sino-Soviet relationship thus spells trouble for the rest of us.

*Richard Pipes*
*Harvard University*

## *The authors reply:*

We appreciate the thoughtful comments of Professors Spence, Barnett, and Pipes on our article. Each raises important issues to which we would like to respond briefly.

Professor Spence astutely sums up the historical parallels to the current reform effort in China, and we agree very much with the thrust of his analysis. We would like to add, though, that the current reform may fare better than previous attempts not only because the Japanese are unlikely again to play the role of a spoiler, but also because the political spectrum among Chinese leaders has shifted during the past century. Unlike previous reform periods, there are now no identifiable leading officials in China who would like to shut out the outside world and seek strength wholly from the country's own unique size and culture. We believe, too, that developments over the course of the twentieth century have gradually produced greater realism in China concerning the problem of meshing the demands of modern technology with the dynamics of the Chinese economic, social, and political environments.

A. Doak Barnett's thoughtful comments require that we explain why we differ with his very optimistic view about the near term future of the reform effort. In part, our more cautiously optimistic view reflects what we have learned from the history of other great reforms—in Turkey under Ataturk, Mexico under Cardenas, Russia under Peter the Great, and so forth. In every instance, the death of the original great reformer produced a period of retrenchment and consolidation.

Our more cautiously optimistic assessment also rests on two additional pillars: the nature of authority in China; and the nature of the next stage of the reform movement. On the former, Chinese notions of authority make it difficult to determine the extent to which the system recently has been reflecting Deng's own personality. Only after his death will we know. In addition, we believe that there is very likely to be a period of uncertainty over the distribution of power at the top in the wake of Deng Xiaoping's demise that will temporarily make it more difficult for Beijing to elicit the commitment of lower level officials to far-reaching changes. Too



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many officials will opt for caution until the succession is fully settled and a strong, durable leader is well along toward consolidating his power. The fact that what our article terms the "second wave" of reform will require a far more dramatic redistribution of power among bureaucracies than the reforms have demanded to date will simply increase the chances of a Status Quo or Abandonment of Reform scenario for this period of uncertainty.

Richard Pipes's comment on our call for stability in Sino-Soviet relations confuses "stability" with wholehearted cooperation. As we stated in our article: "[America has an interest in having] China maintain a stable relationship with the Soviet Union while opposing Soviet military expansion in Asia and the Pacific. Our interests are best served by a Sino-Soviet relationship that combines adversarial and cooperative elements, and in which military rivalry persists." We trust Professor Pipes agrees.

*Michel Oksenberg*
*Kenneth Lieberthal*

## Scientific Incredibility

Russell Seitz's account of how TTAPS bypassed the traditional safeguards of scientific reporting in order to present conclusions directly to the media, and his display of how peer review would have revealed the unrealistic assumptions the authors used in their model, paints a distressing picture of how science can be mis-used in the interests of "serving society." . . .

"In from the Cold" [Fall 1986] documents a serious case that must not be ignored, because it illuminates a glaring departure from the objectivity on which the integrity of science depends. The unrelenting use of advertising to conceal the scientific unraveling of the "nuclear winter" conjecture from the public is a particularly disturbing facet.

Fortunately, the scientific process is self-correcting, a constant cycle of new hypotheses being advanced to overtake older views of how nature works and the testing of new theories in turn. Some stand the tests of scrutiny under peer review, and some do not. Ordinarily there is a vigorous controversy within the scientific community before the initial publication of results, and often there is a heated exchange afterwards. In the case of the TTAPS report, the system is working, as in the long run it must. For, unlike Gresham's Law, good science eventually drives the bad out of existence.

The limits of computer simulation of so complex a dynamic system as the earth's atmosphere are well known—as are the very real capabilities of modeling. It would be tragic if the discrediting of "nuclear winter" were to lead to a lessening of authentic concern about such policy issues as the long-term effects of burning fossil fuels and the stability of the ozone layer.

Thus, the tale of "nuclear winter's" rise and fall is a cautionary one with a simple lesson: The credibility of science depends on public perception of its objectivity and commitment to the public interests that support it.

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*Washington, D.C.*

*Correction*: "In from the Cold: 'Nuclear Winter' Melts Down" (Fall 1986) incorrectly described some of the protagonists. The co-author with Dr. Paul Crützen of "Twilight at Noon" was Dr. John Birks; Russell Peterson is not related to Jeannie Peterson, former editor of *Ambio*; Freeman Dyson is not a Nobel laureate; Jonathan Katz is a professor at Washington University; and George Rathjens is chairman of the Council for a Livable World and past executive of the Federation of American Scientists. The Kendall Foundation made a grant of $80,000 to the Open Space Institute, which in turn paid the retainer to Porter-Novelli Associates.



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# Summits & Troughs

## Owen Harries

IN different ways, both the Reykjavik summit and the Iranian debacle testify to the truth that an activist foreign policy abhors a conceptual vacuum. One of the oddest features of the Reagan presidency is that this most ideological of administrations, one dedicated to an assertive, activist foreign policy, has seen fit to operate without the services in high office of anyone capable of conceptualizing and orchestrating a strategically coherent policy. The few Americans known to possess these abilities have not been invited to fill the top foreign policy jobs during the last six years. The working assumption seems to have been that a successful foreign policy is something that requires no more than common sense and some managerial skills—no knowledge of history, no record of deep contemplation of international affairs, no evidence of strategic grasp. This is not an uncommon assumption among businessmen, who largely comprise the president's closest circle. It has received de facto support from those conservatives whose concern for ideological dependability has caused them to rate character above ability.

The result of proceeding on this assumption has not been a foreign policy devoid of ideas. Rather (in a way that brings to mind Chesterton's observation that when people stop believing in God, they don't believe in nothing but in anything) it has been one promiscuously and indiscriminately attracted to ideas—often of a half-baked kind—in an effort to fill, or at least conceal, the conceptual void existing between the president's instincts and the presumptions of bureaucracy. In the absence of serious thinking at the top, these ideas have tended to come from functionaries elevated above their level of competence, bright young ideologues in middle level positions, and confident "can do" merchants.

The only prospect of something good coming out of the Iranian mess depends on President Reagan's coming to realize that what the administration has is not a management problem but a policy problem, and that fixing it requires more than replacing incompetent managers with more efficient ones. The appointment of Frank Carlucci as Reagan's fifth national security adviser in six years suggests that this is not going to happen. Able as Mr. Carlucci undoubtedly is, he represents a "better manager" solution, not one likely to provide the intellectual and strategic authority the administration's foreign policy so badly needs.

The Iranian story has caused attention to move away from the Reykjavik summit, but both in terms of its intrinsic importance and as a vivid demonstration of the danger of dispensing with conceptual thinking what happened in Iceland demands continuing scrutiny.

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"YOU SEE, the current summit process is very different from that of previous decades," explained the president in his address to the nation immediately after returning from Reykjavik. And he went on to say why: ". . . unlike the past, we're dealing now from a position of strength, and for that reason we have it within our grasp to move speedily with the Soviets towards even more breakthroughs."

If this belief constitutes Ronald Reagan's basic premise in approaching future dealings with Gorbachev, we are in serious trouble. For what the president claims is false. American military strength relative to that of the Soviet Union—which is the only relevant measure in the context of summitry—is considerably less now than it was at the time of the Eisenhower and Kennedy summits. American economic dominance has also declined. These facts are well known. How then can the president believe the exact opposite? Presumably it is because in talking about "a position of strength" he is anticipating and treating as fact the potential accretion of power expected from the increased defense spending of his administration, and particularly from the SDI program. Indeed, in due course these may well improve America's position substantially. But only in due course, and only if post-Reagan administrations sustain what has been started (a big "if," given the record of discontinuity in American defense programs) and the SDI pay-off is as good as its supporters anticipate. In the meantime, as the English say, "potential" butters no parsnips.

Then there is the phrase, "even more breakthroughs." To what does this refer? What breakthroughs have been achieved thus far? In the absence of anything else that could possibly qualify, one can only assume that the president had in mind what happened at Reykjavik up until the final session. And it is true that the administration and most of the liberal arms control fraternity vigorously presented these events as "astonishing" and "massive" breakthroughs. Listen, for example, to Donald Regan: "We got very far. It's like going 99 yards and not scoring on the last yard." This football simile is entirely inappropriate and misleading. Football, a zero sum game, does not involve a bargaining process. If, when you are bargaining with someone, he agrees to accept A, B, and C on condition, and *only* on condition, that you agree to D—and if you are utterly and genuinely adamant that you cannot agree to D—then no progress towards a deal has been made, no "yardage" gained. Conditional agreements, when the conditions are firmly rejected, constitute no breakthrough. At most, a useful clarification of the terms of disagreement will have resulted, but that is all. It is simply to torture language to claim, as George Shultz did in a vain effort to combine honesty and loyalty, that "extremely important potential agreements were reached." Unless there is good reason to believe that either the Reagan administration or the Soviets will change their position on SDI, *no* "potential agreement" was reached in Iceland.

IN A WAY the Reykjavik summit *was* different from those of earlier decades. It represented a qualitative leap in the degree of recklessness and irresponsibility involved, a *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole summit process. The left's faith in summitry is somewhat absurd in the first place, involving as it does an acceptance of a "great man" theory of history by those whose general position denies it. It is also inherently risky, for reasons that have been spelled out repeatedly over the last thirty years. Summits arouse expectations in democracies that in turn create asymmetrical pressures on the participants to reach agreement. They put a premium on demeanor, personal rapport, and atmospherics. They encourage the belief that removing misunderstanding and mistrust is the essence of the problem. They lead to relaxation and undermine staying power.

Usually, a combination of conservative and realist skepticism and concern, together with the vested interest of bureaucrats in keeping control of the process, has worked to minimize these risks. But not in Iceland. In



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this instance President Reagan, aided and abetted by his secretary of state, went without proper preparation to a summit that had no proper agenda. He proceeded to deal with the Russians about the most vital issue of Western security without consulting either his own joint chiefs of staff or America's principal allies. The result has been described as "perhaps the most irresponsible 36 hours in the history of modern diplomacy" (Leon Wieseltier), and "a kind of trapeze act, in which, without benefit of a net, the president has proposed to let go of one swing even before the other is in view" (Senator Albert Gore). Allowing for a little hyperbole (Munich, after all, is part of the history of modern diplomacy), these characterizations seem justified.

Certainly, they are nearer the mark than the attempts of administration spokesmen and some conservatives to celebrate the president's performance as a triumph. George Will, usually so sound and eloquent on the central issues of foreign and defense policy, on this occasion managed only to be eloquent. In ringing terms he declared Reykjavik to be "the most successful U.S. summit" and its final session—the one in which Mr. Reagan said "No"—"The President's finest hour." Many conservatives share this assessment. One can see what they mean, and one should be profoundly glad that the president stood firm at the end. But it really will not do. When someone voluntarily puts himself in the most appalling predicament, is given the chance to get out of it only by the intransigence of his adversary and takes that chance, it hardly amounts to his finest hour or to a laudable moment of decisiveness.

The president had most assuredly put himself in an appalling predicament by going beyond the 50 percent cut of ballistic missiles proposal and his pre-summit position on the reduction of intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe, to offer the total abolition of both all ballistic missiles and the European IMF. (I set aside as unworthy the defense that Mr. Reagan was bluffing, knowing that Gorbachev would not accept the deal—a defense that, given the gravity of the issues, amounts to a deadly insult). Had the deal been accepted, the centerpieces of Western defense policy since the 1940s—the structure of deterrence and the Nato alliance—would have been fatally weakened, and the Soviet superiority in conventional forces (together with their shorter-range nuclear weapons and their formidable civil defense system) would have been left as the decisive fact in the central balance.

Even if one supports the SDI program without qualification, such a bet on its ultimate efficacy, and on the time-table for its development and deployment, is completely unwarranted. Even if one believes that the usefulness of Nato has passed, that is not the way to abolish it. And even if one ardently supports a substantial buildup of the West's conventional forces (a much more expensive business than pursuing SDI or building up nuclear-weapons strength, it should be noted), creating a general atmosphere of disarmament is not the way to promote it.

Despite itself, the Reykjavik summit could do some good, but only if it were recognized for what it was—a near disaster—and not hailed as a near triumph. Being taken to the edge and made to look over is one way of learning to take serious things seriously. (In the week after the event, even Anthony Lewis was reflecting that "the balance of terror has, after all, worked to prevent war between the superpowers," Edward Kennedy was declaring "the folly of sudden summit meetings," and the Europeans were expressing firmer views than they had for decades.) But as it is, an unnatural alliance of administration spokesmen and the arms control lobby has formed to insist—on the basis of the "99-yard gain" interpretation—that disaster should not be allowed to slip from our grasp.

WHAT ABOUT the summit next time? Unless the Iranian mess completely immobilizes Reagan's foreign policy, there is almost certain to be one sometime in 1987, for in the circumstances Gorbachev would be mad not to press for a



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meeting, and if he agrees to come to the United States it will be virtually impossible to refuse him. What significance do the events of October have for such a meeting? Well, first they have undermined deterrence seriously by weakening the position of those who defend it. Reykjavik, declares a director of the Union of Concerned Scientists (Kurt Gottfried), "has begun an overdue revolution in perceptions." Robert Karl Manoff, a director of New York University's Center for War, Peace and the News Media (a title that in itself suggests a program of action rather than a discipline), elaborates:

> Why was the President able to be more forthcoming than his Congressional opponents, the arms control community and the peace movement? For one thing these advocates of traditional arms control—myself included—have been advised and in many cases led by men and women who have a political, intellectual or psychological stake in maintaining a policy of deterrence . . . . Second, the President's opponents were fearful of pressing too hard for an agreement, lest they offend what they saw as the anti-Soviet sensibilities of the American people.

But now, Manoff asserts, all is changed:

> . . . at Reykjavik [the President] handed his opponents a gift: quite apart from what he believes about Star Wars, he has destroyed the taboo against talking about the abolition of nuclear weapons. Reykjavik may have failed in the near term, but Ronald Reagan may indeed have earned his place in history with his willingness to negotiate what no President has had the courage to touch.

Call it courage or call it foolhardiness, there is some substance in this. In fact, of course, the very notion of SDI involves an ultimate rejection of deterrence. But there is a great difference between envisaging a move from deterrence to defense when the means for such a defense are finally to hand, and a precipitate undermining of deterrence at a time when there is nothing available to replace it. In any event, the arms control community and the peace movement are now all set to advance behind the president on the central issue of deterrence, and to invite their opponents to choose between supporting Ronald Reagan and maintaining that under existing circumstances deterrence is non-negotiable.

Second, Reykjavik has done what conservatives have always feared summit conferences would do: it has raised unrealistic and dangerous expectations concerning the imminent possibility of a general settlement. How could it be otherwise, with everyone in the administration, from the president down, insisting that the Iceland summit came within a hair's breadth of such an agreement? Those expectations are going to be very significant before and during the next summit. At Reykjavik, the president was able at the last minute to retrieve the situation which resulted from his "courage" without suffering politically. The next time it will be much more difficult to resist a bad agreement along the lines he has legitimized without appearing rigid, negative, and lacking in good faith.

Third, there is the question of SDI. The immediate result of the last summit was to increase support for the program, but for several reasons that is unlikely to last. For one, it can be predicted that there will be a very active campaign to present SDI simultaneously as (a) the one obstacle to achieving a nuclear-free world and (b) the most powerful lever for bringing such a world into being (the Bundy-Kennedy-McNamara-Smith team has already made a favorable reassessment of SDI as a bargaining chip, following the Iceland summit). For another, as some commentators have pointed out, the administration's position on SDI in the context of the Grand Compromise is incoherent and difficult to defend. If you are moving towards the abolition of ballistic missiles, why insist on an SDI program, the essential purpose of which is to combat those missiles? To guard against cheating and possible attack by third powers (the administration's answer to this question) you do not need anything as elaborate, expensive, or distant in results as the SDI program. The force of this argument is likely to tell over time, as long as the president continues to stand by his Iceland negotiating position. Moreover, there are clear



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the president continues to stand by his Iceland negotiating position. Moreover, there are clear signs that, after reflecting on the benefits of the deal offered him in October, Gorbachev is preparing to be considerably more flexible on SDI testing, limiting Soviet objections to testing in space. If this is so the United States may be faced with the choice of either proceeding with that deal, which would be disastrous, or of retreating ignominiously from it under pressure and suffering a major political reversal.

The last unfortunate consequence flowing from Reykjavik is the surrender of the agenda. Despite strong disclaimers by the administration before the event, and considerably weaker ones after it, arms control utterly dominated the summit; and the dramatic nature of the deal that was left on the table ensures that, if it remains there, this will be true the next time too. In his speech to the nation, Mr. Reagan said that human rights and regional matters were discussed, and then concluded lamely: "But, by their choice, the main subject was arms control." By their choice! Considering the importance that control of the agenda has in any negotiation—apart from anything else, it signifies whose will is prevailing—this amounts to the admission of a major diplomatic failure.

What is to be done to extricate the government of the United States from the mess into which it has got itself? One possible course to follow is that of obfuscation: to stand by the proposals made at Reykjavik publicly, while introducing enough complications, conditions, and qualifications to ensure that they will not be accepted, even if the SDI barrier is circumvented by the Soviets. This would avoid disaster, but it would fool no one. More seriously, the ostensible cleaving to the terms of the deal would continue to undermine the intellectual foundation of deterrence. A more difficult course politically, but a healthier one, would be for the president to repudiate openly the closing American negotiating position at Reykjavik and confess that second thoughts had prevailed. After the trimming and hedging of the Iranian fiasco such frankness would be sound politically as well as in terms of policy.



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